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A DISCOURSE Of the POOR.

By the late Hon. ROGER NORTH, *Esq;*

(Price One Shilling)

BRITISH MUSEUM

A

DISCOURSE

Of the

POOR.

Shewing the

PERNICIOUS TENDENCY

Of the

LAWS now in Force

For their

MAINTENANCE and SETTLEMENT;

Containing likewiſe,

Some CONSIDERATIONS

Relating to

NATIONAL IMPROVEMENT in general.

By the late Hon. ROGER NORTH, *Eſq;*

LONDON:
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BRITISH MUSEUM

THE PREFACE.

IT may not be amiſs to acquaint the Reader beforehand, that, of the three general Heads propoſed to be diſcuſſed in the following Papers, he will not find the laſt ſo fully treated of as the honourable Author ſeems at firſt to have intended. I am perſuaded his Thoughts were as much taken up about that, as about either of the two foregoing Particulars: But as it is generally much leſs difficult to pull down than build up; ſo he could eaſily demonſtrate the pernicious Tendency of the Poor Laws as they at preſent ſtand; but to form a complete Scheme for the Support and Maintenance of the Poor, in ſuch a Manner as to anſwer all Objections, it is plain he thought he could not; at leaſt to his own Satisfaction. I am apt to believe it appear'd to him as a Thing impoſſible to be done, otherwiſe than from Obſervation of thoſe Evils, whatever they might be, which would be found by Experience to accrue from the Repeal of thoſe Acts, and to deſerve a Remedy. And accordingly in his laſt Reviſal of theſe Papers, he had entirely omitted the Conſideration of this

Article; and for those Reasons chiefly which are alledged at the Conclusion of the second Proposition. But as I found amongst his loose Papers a Hint or two, touching some hard Cases which, as he observes, might happen upon such Repeal, I have not omitted them. But whether they be deserving of Notice, or no, must be submitted to the Judgment of the Publick.

In the Account of the present State of Stow in the Wold, *which I had from the Rev. Mr.* Brown *of that Place, and is put by Way of Note at the Bottom of Page* 42. *I observ'd he had remark'd, among other Things, that* there is no Land belonging to that Town but what it stands upon. *This appeared to me almost as extraordinary as what the honourable Author has said of it in his Book. I therefore desired that Gentleman to be a little more explicite with Regard to that particular Article. And he was so good as, soon after I wrote, to return me the following Answer.*

" *There are, in the Parish of* Stow, *two*
" *Hamlets called* Maugersburg *and* Donington;
" *both which contribute, jointly with the*
" *Town of* Stow, *towards the Support of the*
" *Parish Church; but are in their Poor's*
" *Rates, and in every other Respect, separate*
" *and distinct from* Stow. *And, as there is*
" *no Land belonging to the Town of* Stow, *the*
" *Poor, which are very numerous, are sup-*
" *ported by a Rate charged upon the Houses,*

" *which*

" *which are, moſt of them, old and very bad;*
" *and upon the Stock of the few Tradeſmen*
" *that live in the Town. Other Pariſhes*
" *come ſo near the Town, that two Houſes,*
" *contiguous to, and generally ſuppoſed to be*
" *Part of, the Town, are in two other Pa-*
" *riſhes, one of which, that is on the North-*
" *Eaſt Side of the Town, is in the Pariſh of*
" Broadwell; *and the other, on the South-Weſt*
" *Side, is in that of* Netherſwell. *An Inn*
" *upon the Foſs (for the Foſs runs cloſe by the*
" *Town) is Part in the Town of* Stow, *and*
" *Part in the Pariſh of* Netherſwell. *The*
" *Inhabitants are ſupplied with Water from*
" *two Springs, which ariſe very near the Town.*
" *One of which is in the Pariſh of* Broadwell,
" *and the other in that of* Netherſwell." *This particular Account I thought would not be diſagreeable to the curious Reader, as it is a good Explanation of a common Saying, current in that Country, of the Inhabitants of this Town; namely,* that they have there no Element but Air, *as being deſtitute of Wood, common Field, and Water.*

In Page 77 the honourable Author inſtances a ſecond Time in the Town of Colcheſter, *and with a little Alteration, but not material. In Page 43, he ſays, that the Bays-makers uſed then to give the Poor Six-pence a Day out of their own Pockets, and make up their Wages with Four-pence by Way of Collection. Here, he ſays, that the Poor had Four-pence a Day private*

private Wages, and Six-pence a Day by Collection. This may be a Slip of the Memory; or, perhaps, this Thing may have been done both Ways by ſomebody or other. As it is alledged upon an Occaſion ſomething different from the former, I did not eraſe it.

As to the Time when this Diſcourſe was wrote, it muſt be before, or ſoon after the Revolution; as the then preſent State of the Town of Stow in the Wold, *as deſcribed by the honourable Author, muſt preceed their being forced by Sir* Richard Atkins *to make a Poor's Rate.*

He has interſpers'd in the following Diſcourſe, (agreeably to the Faſhion of his Time) many Latin *Phraſes which he found were full to his Purpoſe, and very expreſſive of his Meaning.---Moſt of theſe I have attempted to tranſlate as well as I could. But one Sentence in Page* 48, *I was much puzzled to find an apt Tranſlation for. It is this. The Author ſays, that,* in Peopling, Lucrum ceſſans eſt Damnum emergens. *By which I cannot tell what he ſhould mean, otherwiſe than what we do, when we ſay, in* Engliſh, *that* Not going forward is going backward.

It may be ſome Confirmation of what is advanced in theſe Papers, under the Article of Depopulation, *to conſider what I obſerved myſelf the other Day, whilſt I ſpent a few Hours in a certain Town in the County of* Suffolk, *where the principal Concerns of the free Britiſh Fiſhery*

are

are carried on. Among other Things that paſt in Converſation, this invaluable Branch of Trade, which had been ſo long neglected, was mentioned with thoſe Encomiums that are thought due to it by ſuch as wiſh well to the Marine of theſe Kingdoms. In Oppoſition to this, one of the principal Inhabitants of the Place declared himſelf very uneaſy at the great Reſort of People thither, occaſioned by it. And when he was aſked what Reaſon he had to be diſturbed about that, he returned for Anſwer, that it was to be feared leſt ſome of them ſhould marry and ſettle, and ſo bring a Charge upon the Pariſh. *Fine Sentiments theſe for a Member of that Community which ſubſiſts by Trade and Manufactures! Or rather, fine Laws thoſe which create in People ſuch Sentiments!*

And now, as the growing Inconveniencies of theſe Laws appeared evident to this great Man ſo long ago; and inclined him to ſet his Thoughts down upon Paper, for the Service of his Country, to demonſtrate the evil Conſequences of them: I have thought it my Duty to make as publick as I can, whatever I could find of his Notes relating to this Subject; as well as I may thoſe upon any other, which, like theſe, may be approved of by Perſons of Abilities and Judgment.

And if the following Obſervations ſhall be found in the leaſt to have forwarded the Amendment, in any Degree, of our preſent evil

evil Conſtitution in Regard to theſe Laws; as it would have been the greateſt Satisfaction to the Author, could he have ſeen the good Effects; ſo it will give no leſs Pleaſure to the Editor, if it ſhould pleaſe God that he lives to be an Eye-Witneſs of ſuch good Fruits reſulting from the Labours of this extraordinary Perſon.

March 22, 1753. MOUNT. NORTH.

BRITISH 5 DE 83 MUSEUM

ERRATUM.

In Page 68, at the Beginning of the 35th Section, for *as they to draw it*, read, *as was neceſſary to draw it.*

A Diſ-

A

Diſcourſe of the POOR.

MY Intent is to examine the Condition of the Nation with Regard to the Laws made, and in Force, for Maintenance of the Poor, and their Settlements; and to ſhew that all the People of *England*, as well the Poor as Rich, are great Sufferers by them; and, unleſs this Conſtitution be reformed, that Poverty and Deſolation of the whole muſt ſucceed; and, laſtly, propoſe the eaſieſt and ſofteſt Methods, I can think of, for compaſſing this nice Buſineſs. But, in the Proceſs, touch upon ſeveral Matters incidentally relating to National Improvements.

1. *A ſhort State of the Laws themſelves.*

43 *Eliz.* 2. Overſeers ſhall be choſen annually in *Eaſter* Week, for raiſing (by Taxation) a Stock in the Pariſh wherewith to employ the Poor, and to relieve the Aged and Impotent; to continue to the End of the next Seſſions of Parliament.

Continued over. 1 *Jac.* 25. 3 *Car.* 4. 16, 17 *Car.* 4. At the Meeting of this Parliament, the firſt Thing they did was to continue all Laws, depending on Periods to determine them, until Proviſion ſhould be otherwiſe made by Parliament.

Diverſe Laws have been made for puniſhing Vagabonds and ſturdy Beggars, erecting Houſes of Correction, and for ſending Men to the Places of their Birth, or laſt Habitation, if the other could not be found. 31 *Eliz.* 4, 17. 1 *Jac.* 7. 7 *Jac.* 4.

But one ſays, that, after branding on the Shoulder, the Perſon ſhall be ſent to his laſt Dwelling; and, if that were not known, to the Place of his Birth. 7 *Jac.* 4.

Now, all this while, who were the Pariſhes proper Poor, and what was Dwelling, were troubleſome Queſtions.

14 *Car.* 2. 12. It was enacted, that, within 40 Days of any Perſon's coming to a Town, the Juſtices of the Peace, on Complaint, ſhould remove him to the Place where he was laſt ſettled for ſuch 40 Days.

This Act ſet up the 40 Days Settlement, but being not perpetual,

It was continued for ſeven Years, and from thence to the End of the next Seſſions of Parliament, with this Addition, *viz.* That the 40 Days ſhall not commence but from the Time of Notice in Writing left with the Pariſh Officers (which the Party is enjoined to do)

of

of the Perſon and his intended Settlement there. 1 *Jac.* 2.

The Notice to be read in the Church, and regiſter'd in a Poor's Book. But being a Pariſh Officer is a Settlement. 3, 4 *W. & M.* 11.

Thus ſtands the Law at preſent; and, under them, the Practice hath been for Pariſhes to chooſe Overſeers, and make pecuniary Rates to be levied of the Inhabitants, for Maintenance of the Poor: Which Rates muſt be confirmed by two Juſtices; and, upon Complaint of any Perſon to one Juſtice, he, upon hearing the Officers and the Party, orders Collection to be given. And the Officers paſs Accounts before the Juſtices, from whom, in all Caſes, an Appeal lies to the Seſſions.

2. The firſt Occaſion of theſe Laws.

Upon the Diſſolution of the Monaſteries, and appropriating all their Houſes and Poſſeſſions to private Intereſt, many People, who uſed to be fed upon their Alms, and conſequently not much addicted to work, grew miſcreantly poor and neceſſitous. This might create a general Commiſeration, and Diſpoſition in the Nation, to yield to any plauſible Project which ſhould ſtart up for Relief of the Poor. But, as Things are not done ordinarily whilſt the Occaſion preſſeth, but after the Brunt is over, ſo here 60 Years paſſed between the Diſſolution and the firſt of theſe Laws; whilſt thoſe, who wanted Monaſtery Alms, were ſtarved out of the World. So that I aſſign to this

Cauſe only, a Diſpoſition of the People, created by viſible Poverty, ſuppoſed to ariſe from the Diſſolution. But the true Source might be a farther Reach.

In the Reign of Queen *Elizabeth* Popery was to be thoroughly extirpated; as may be ſeen in the Laws of that Reign, which ſtrike at the Root. Thoſe, who acted, ſought to juſtify themſelves to the World as much as might be; and particularly in this Inſtance, whereof the Catholic Party (which was very conſiderable in *England*) made Advantage, by clamouring that the Reformation had deſtroy'd all Chriſtian Charity in *England*, and left no Reſource for the ſtarving Poor to be kept alive, or comforted with Food, as was done by the Monaſteries. Therefore it is reaſonable to think that this Clamour was a principal Occaſion of ſetting up this national Proviſion for the Poor; which was very extraordinary and new, ſcarce known in *England*, or any Nation elſe.

However adult and ſtrong the Reformation was in that Reign, it is plain from the Laws, that the Parliament ſought to be juſtified to the World, and to maintain a Reputation in Point of Form and Regularity abroad, and to eſtabliſh their own Intereſt at home, and advance the Credit of the Reformation in other Countries. Witneſs,

1. The Act which diſtinguiſheth upon the Supremacy, and reſtrains it to Government, exclu-

excluding Eccleſiaſtical Order and Functions. This was to anſwer the Cavils that a Woman was Head of the *Engliſh* reformed Church.

2. The Act which declares the Validity of Biſhops, and their Succeſſion from the Apoſtles, *&c.* which was to anſwer the Pretenſion that the *Engliſh* Reformation had interrupted that Succeſſion.

3. The Act, for ſetting up the High Commiſſion, was to anſwer the Fancy that Eccleſiaſtical Power, to enquire of and puniſh Spiritual Diſorders, was wanted.

And laſtly, to return; That Law for the Poor was intended to refell a Calumny, as if, in taking away the Monaſteries, the Poor had been robbed of their daily Bread, and nothing provided for them in lieu of it. Whereas *Now*, a better Proviſion was made for them, by a working Stock, to labour and be paid, and ſo eat honeſtly, and not live lazily, as before. And had there not been this Inducement, the Law, as I gueſs, whatever Reaſon or Diſpoſition there was for doing ſomewhat, had never been made.

3. The Advantages propoſed by this Law.

I ſuppoſe that, beſides Charity and ſetting the Poor on work, which might incline many to agree to this Law, there was a farther Policy by it, which was thought, and ſtrongly argued to be for the publick Good; and that was, Encreaſe of Induſtry and Manufactures, and Prevention of Robbing and Stealing; and

and farther, that theſe Stocks once ſettled, ſuch Gain and Advantage of Encreaſe would grow out of them, as would enrich the Pariſhes, and provide for the Aged and Impotent ſo as no more Want, Poverty, or Charges for the Poor ſhould be known in *England*. So here was Charity to the Poor, and the Utility of the Nation, moſt amiably combined together; and this muſt needs allure all Men into the Deſign; as moſt Projects, however in themſelves impracticable or pernicious, have yet very tempting Faces to deceive with. But, in this Inſtance, the Parliament was not deceived beyond an Experiment, for they made the Law but temporary.

4. The Abuſes, which are the true Effects of this Law, in general.

It was little then ſuſpected, as it hath ſince proved, that this Law, inſtead of leſſening, ſhould multiply Poverty and Stealing; inſtead of Mercy, bring Cruelty upon the Poor; inſtead of promoting Induſtry, encourage all Manner of Idleneſs and Debauchery: And that the ſpecious Project of raiſing and managing Pariſh Stocks, whereby to eaſe the Inhabitants and employ the Poor, ſhould all vaniſh *in Fumo*, and nothing at all of it be done (by Virtue of this Law) in the whole Nation. But, on the contrary, in ſome Places, the Poor want Work and cannot have it, and, in others, Work abounds, and there are not Poor to do it; and, which is worſe, one cannot accommodate the other by tranſplanting the People.

People. And that diſcouraging the Encreaſe of People, which is alſo kept down by ſuch as, to avoid the Burthen of Poor, demoliſh Houſes, encloſe Commons, and drive People from them with Carts and Whips, whatever Uſe or Need may be of them, the Nation is extremely depopulated. And all this while an immenſe Charge upon the Eſtates of *England*, ſufficient (indeed) to ſupport the Crown in War and Peace, carried on by a perpetual and regular Taxation of Money (inſtead of Working Stocks) and that to be managed by a Crew of well-inſtructed Pariſh Officers, whoſe Inſolence and Cruelty to the Poor is inſupportable, and waſte great Part in ſecret corrupt Miſapplications. All this, and much more Miſchief, comes out of this Law; which at the making the Acts, was not dreamt of, but found by coſtly and ſad Experience to be true, and ſhall, partly, be demonſtrated in the following Diſcourſe; whereby I hope to ſtir up every one to aſſiſt in demoliſhing ſuch a ſpecious, but deceitful, Trade, as this Law hath introduced.

5. Some Obſervations of the Steps this Law hath made before it was perpetual.

The Parliament were aware at firſt that a great and general Change was introduced; and being doubtful of the Miſchiefs that might ariſe, made the Law to determine with the firſt next Seſſions of Parliament; whereby there might be an Opportunity of continuing, mending, or letting it fall, according as they ſhould find Cauſe upon Trial. 43 *Eliz.* Then

Then it had another Continuance in the firſt Parliament of *Jac.* I. which held till 4 *Car.* and then was continued over till the Troubles grew ripe; and that was after a long Diſcontinuance of Parliaments. The next Seſſion of Parliament was which, in all likelihood, had determined this Law. But this Parliament, leſt Inconvenience might happen from a Neglect of continuing the good Laws that depended on their Seſſions, thought fit to continue good and bad, all in general Terms together, until other Proviſion ſhould be made.

Now it is under this Act that this Law, for the Poor and Settlements, proves to be perpetual. And I have been informed by ſome, who were upon the Stage at that Time, that, even then, the Miſchiefs of it were ſo far ſeen, and the Members ſo ſenſible of them, that, if it had paſſed by Debate and Queſtion upon this particular Law, it had certainly fallen.

There was an Intention in the Parliament, when the greater Affairs of the Nation were ſettled, as they vainly expected would ſoon follow, to review all theſe Laws at Leiſure, and continue, mend, or let fall, as they found Reaſon from the Experience of them. Elſe it had been a Madneſs to perpetuate a Liſt of Laws blindfold. Nor was that Courſe, taken, prudent with all that, nor adding the Fear that good Laws might fall in Company: For the

the common Law, which takes Place in all diſtatuted Caſes, is ſufficient for Government of the Nation; and for the moſt Part, if not always, is better than the Statute Proviſions are. Therefore it were a more prudent Courſe to leave all to the common Law than ſuffer a bad Statute to ſtand; and not to prop up all for fear a little Good comes down with bad. Therefore this Courſe being miſtakenly inverted by that Parliament, it becomes future Parliaments to be wiſer, and to review all thoſe Acts, ſo huddled together in one blind Continuance, and, at leaſt, put them in *ſtatu quo*, and affix a Time for their Determination.

It is not enough to ſay that any one may offer a Bill to repeal this, as well as other Laws; for then the Movement muſt be out of ſome particular Perſon or Number: And perhaps they are not found who will advance their Names in a Matter ſo tender, and turn Sollicitors, as is, for the moſt Part, neceſſary to get a Law repealed. But if a Law ſtands upon Continuance, then, unleſs the Virtue of it be found ſuch as ſhall ſtir up a Care of it, it falls without looking after; and if it be inconvenient, as this is to a fatal Degree, there is no Doubt but, if it were ſo reduced, it would fall in Courſe, and no Perſon be expoſed as Agent in it: For many Things of very good Uſe, and founded in right Reaſon, may be, and often are, miſapprehended by the Rabble. Therefore it is a Prudence to cover

them who ſeek to do the People ſuch Good as either they underſtand not at all, or miſunderſtand: Elſe we muſt expect no Patriots, or Men of true and ſincere public Spirits. And how few of theſe we have in our Time, and how much ſuch Diſcouragements hinder the having any more for the future, is not of this Deſign to determine.

I know it will be alledged that few Laws have had a longer Time of Probation than this; for between 43 *Eliz.* and 3 *Car.* there is the whole Reign of *Jac.* I. And if the Law had been found inconvenient to the Nation, as ſurely muſt have appeared in that Time, if there were Cauſe for it, the Nation had Opportunity enough to have provided a Remedy; ſo the Continuance is an Argument of the Goodneſs, at leaſt, not extreme Miſchief, as we pretend, of this Law. I anſwer, ſome Things, and, for Inſtance, ſuch as cover the whole People, either do not put forth their Conſequences ſo early, or, for Want of mutual Converſe and Correſpondence, or, perhaps, right Senſe and Underſtanding of Things, the Conſequences are not ſo ſoon inferred, as in ſome other Caſes of Government or Power, which, perhaps, may touch but a few. As if a Law ſet up a Trial for Life by a Judge without a Jury, every one ſays *it may be my Caſe.* But ſay, a Rate ſhall be levied from the whole People, and we are apt to ſay, *Let others look out*, or, *I ſhall fare as the reſt do.*

do. So alſo an Evil that ſtrikes at all at once, as to take away Life or Eſtate without Trial, is more reſented than that which prunes it away by little and little; as theſe former Inſtances ſhew. Now the Miſchief of this Law, which I aſcribe moſt to DEPOPULATION, cannot appear but to very ſagacious Wits, until the Conſequences of the Depopulation is felt. We love Depopulation while it is called *eaſing us of Poor*, that are, for the moſt part, a Burthen, as alſo thieviſh and troubleſome, until Want of Men, Women, and Children, to plow, ſow, weed, make Hay, carry, threſh, ſpin, *&c.* makes a general Scarcity and Dearneſs of Manufactures, and conſequently, a faſtidious Plenty of ſome Sorts of Products, as Wool, Cattle, *&c.* and alſo of Corn, Hay, *&c.* but ſurcharged with vaſt Wages; and then we cry out, *O the Want of People!* Thus our Underſtandings are groſs, and influenced only by feeling. Now until this State of Feeling and Want arrives, a wiſe Man may charm like an Angel, and not be heard. And however clearly he diſcerns the growing Evils, he ſhall not convince others untill the Cudgel hath croſſed their Backs; and, inſtead of being thanked and encouraged for his kind Hints, Whiſpers ſhall paſs, as if ſome Trick, or private Intereſt were aimed at. And, if that hurt not, Objections ſhall be ſtarted, as is uſual againſt all Innovations, though freſh Liberty is propoſed againſt accuſtomed Slavery;

and the leaſt Objection is entertained, and magnified by vain Suppoſals and Imaginations, to hinder the Reception of a profitable Reform. Whereas nothing under the Sun is free from Capacity of Abuſe; and the ſettled Order and Conſtitution of the Nation, its Policy and Juſtice, admits the ſame or much ſtronger Objections. So old *Egyptian* Fleſh-pots held harder than the Hopes of a new Land of Plenty.

Now to return to our Time and the preſent Subject: I do not find the threatening Miſchiefs ſo great as the ſupine Neglect of our Countrymen in Parliament to obviate them. Nay, although the Evil pincheth, and we find not Hands to perform our Harveſts, none ſtirs, however ſenſible the Occaſion of it is; as if they were aſleep, or ſurrender'd the Public to blind Chance, being reſolved to accept the Ruin, by whatever Means it comes. This makes me recollect my Thoughts, and commit them to Paper; whereby I am at preſent diverted, and hereafter, if Occaſion be, may have Recourſe to them, and recover the Conſiderations I now have had upon deliberate thinking and converſe on the Subject. And if I never ſee Occaſion to uſe them, perhaps ſome that follow me, and will be troubled to peruſe my Papers, may, and I hope, will be inclined to favour their own and Poſterity's Intereſt, and be induced to ſet their Hand to the pulling down this unhappy Conſtitution.

It

It may perhaps be eſteemed an Undertaking not the beſt natur'd, if not right-down uncharitable, to heave at the preſent Eſtabliſhment of the Laws for the Poor, which, ſome may ſay, being removed, expoſeth Thouſands to a State of Famine. And this, exaggerated to the ſhort-ſcented Multitude, may draw a Fury upon any one as ſuch a Character or Event deſerves: And, ſo underſtood, I am far from being concerned. But if I make appear that this Eſtabliſhment, inſtead of a Proviſion, is in Truth a Snare to the Poor, and Cauſe of Poverty, robbing them of all Means to mend their Condition, either by Induſtry or Removal, and ſnatcheth away their Dwelling and daily Bread; and moreover, pins them down to their Miſery, and, in the End, proves the Death and Deſtruction of more than ever Want did in the Time; then, I gueſs, my better Intentions may be accepted. However, as to my own Sincerity and Charity, I ſhall not appeal to what I write, but what I practice; and I hope that will indemnify me: So I reſume the Diſcourſe and proceed.

In the Proſecution of which Diſcourſe, I ſhall propoſe, in the general, three Things. 1. That the End and Deſign of this Law is in no Sort attained by the Uſe and Practice of it. 2. That the Public is extremely damnified, and in Danger of utter Ruin from it. 3. The Means I think moſt apt for obtaining a Regulation with the leaſt Inconvenience.

The

6. *That the Ends of this Law fail.* The Intent and Deſign of this Law I ſhall conſider under three Heads.

1. Prevention of Beggars, Thieves, Vagabonds, and other ſuch Nuiſances to the Public.
2. Charity to the Poor.
3. Encouragement of Induſtry.

1. As to the Prevention of common Beggars, Thieves, and Offenders, ſuppoſed to ſpring from Poverty, which this Law intended to remove; conſider, firſt, if there are fewer ſuch, now, than probably would have been if the Act had not been made.

It is hard to determine what the State of this Caſe, as to common Beggars, was before, and about, the Time of making the Act; becauſe it is of a Time paſt Memory; and Hiſtory doth not condeſcend to touch ſuch Matters; nor hath the Act any Preamble to ſhew the Inducement of it. But if we reflect what Numbers are now in all Towns and Places of Note, eſpecially the capital City of *London*, where not a Door, Perſon, or Coach abroad is free from Application; it is not eaſy to imagine there could be more at any Time.

I cannot avoid obſerving that, about *London*, the Inconvenience from Beggars is become almoſt inſupportable; and that it proceeds not from meer Poverty, becauſe there wants no Employment and Pay for them that will take it; Wages being ſo high, that a common La-

Labourer earns 20*d.* or 18*d.* a Day; but from Vice, and, that grand one, Lazineſs. For Begging is no hard Labour, and hath a Sort of Freedom as well as Luxury (if there be any Truth in common Fame) in it, which tempts Men to beg rather than work. But farther, it is a Trade to beg, and not only a Trade for Subſiſtance but Profit. If it were not ſo, it would not be ſo plied by Men of ſound Complections and athletic Conſtitutions as we continually ſee follow it. If the Profit of a Trade fails, the Traders leave it, and the Employ is deſerted: But this is full, and, as ſome ſay, regulated as any formed Society; whereby they are enabled to carry on their Impoſture in due Form and Method, and for the common Intereſt of their Calling, as well as Jollity and Feaſting, like a formed trading City Company.

It is notorious that theſe hypocritical People, having learnt to counterfeit real Poverty by lamentable Tones and Looks, impudently impoſe upon the charitable Diſpoſition of good People, and then laugh at their Eaſineſs and their own Succeſſes. It is not eaſy for any one, not a liſted Member of the Society, to diſtinguiſh a real poor Perſon from an Impoſtor, although well uſed to the Town. Much leſs can ſuch, as are affected by Cries and diſguiſed Miſery, diſtinguiſh; and, with them, the Falſe hath an Advantage, becauſe it is diſplay'd

play'd with Art and Addreſs; whilſt true Poverty is often modeſt and ſilent, and ſo toucheth no Paſſion.

The truly-neceſſitous Poor ſuffer much from this public Abuſe of Charity; for many are ſo ſcandaliz'd as not to give Alms but to ſuch as they know to be poor and helpleſs; and unleſs they ſtumble upon ſuch (for few will ſearch for them) they give no Charity at all. And ſuch as do give Alms to common Beggars, commonly miſplace it upon luxurious Counterfeits, who are importunate and very diſſimulative; whilſt the neceſſitous Poor are, as I ſaid, more modeſt, and preſs not ſo much; And even that Modeſty ſhall be counterfeited. All which Conſiderations make a Jealouſy fall upon all that aſk Alms, and occaſions much leſs to be given in Charity than otherwiſe would be.

This ſeeming Digreſſion ſerves our Purpoſe in ſhewing that the Laws for the Poor have not hindered or reformed the Trade of common Begging. But, as it is grown up, in all Probability, ſince the making the Act (and a great Encreaſe of it falls within moſt of our Memories) ſo, if Order be not taken to hinder, it will farther encreaſe; till the Scandal, or more general Poverty, introducing a total Defection of Alms, puts Bounds to it. I grant it is a cruel Thing to hinder ſuch as are poor from aſking Relief: But the Abuſes of it may be taken away by better Regulations

of

of the State of the Nation as to the Poor; and then by permitting none to beg but ſuch as are really deſerving Poor. And, that well looked after, I think Begging ought to be promoted as a Means of Virtue to the Rich; giving them Opportunities of exerciſing the Duty of Charity, againſt which they will not (as now) have ſuch fair Pretences.

Then next, as to idle Perſons, Vagabonds, Thieves, Clippers, *&c.* ſurely there could not be ſo many, when theſe Laws were made firſt, as now. Nor is there any Sort of Reaſon, from the Practice of them, to fancy the Contrary, or that they will ever make any Advances towards it. For who, by theſe Laws, are ſupplied with Work? What Country Pariſhes have raiſed Stocks of Hemp, Flax, *&c.* and kept the ſame going, as the Law requires, whereby the Poor may have a conſtant Employment? I grant, that (out of the Munificence of particular Perſons, and not from Taxations under this Law) there are, in ſome Places, Stocks and Work-houſes; and while ſome very induſtrious upright Men have look'd after the Manufactures, they have ſtood for ſome Time: But, if you examine now, you will find even thoſe Stocks waſted, and ſlunk into private Purſes, ate up by loſing Accounts, made ſo (perhaps) by eating, drinking, and ſuch corrupt Charges brought upon them by the Managers; whereby the Deſigns, however pious and well-laid, are almoſt, if not alto-

gether, fruſtrated. Nay, the Houſes of Correction, for the Counties, ſet up by Statute for Work, and which are, or ſhould be, continually under the Inſpection of the Juſtices of the Peace, are of little or no Uſe. It is true, they ſerve for Priſons, and a Sort of Puniſhment: So doth the common Goal. But neither are famous for Encreaſe of Work, publick Stock, or Reformation of any Note there, unleſs it be that from half-Rogues, they are there conſummated.

It may be objected, that the Deſign of theſe Laws being ſo very good *in Hypotheſi*, and failing only in Practice, may, by future Laws, be ſo well invigorated and corrected, that a better Execution will enſue; and then the Advantages, propoſed, may have Effect, which, hitherto, by remiſs Execution, or corrupt Uſages have failed, or made Things worſe. As would ſoon be ſeen if greater Vigilance and Rigour were uſed.

Now with Reſerve that no Medicine will cure unſound *Stamina*, or make this Conſtitution, which, I ſay, is intrinſically bad (as will be ſhewn) to be wholeſome and good, I anſwer, at preſent, that Severities upon the executive Part will not mend, but make the Evil much worſe. Which lets my Thoughts into a new Series of Matter, concerning Puniſhments as now uſed in *England*, which, I conceive, may be allowed a Place here.

My Sentiment of this Matter is, that Penalties are the worſt Means of enforcing the Obſervance of Laws. If it can be done by milder Methods, that is, by the Inducement of Intereſt, or other Engagement of the free Will, it is infinitely better. Punitive Laws do not regulate ſo effectually, as Laws of Encouragement: For Men will follow Encouragements againſt Danger of Puniſhments; but will not go from Intereſt, if they underſtand it, into Danger. Wherefore, if any publick Concern can be ſo eſtabliſhed, that it ſhall be the Intereſt of all Men to conform to it, there needs no Puniſhment to drive them. And many Things may be done by Methods and Encouragements, which Puniſhments will never obtain. And here lies the Art of Legiſlature, whereby publick Order is preſerved without excoriating the Subjects. Puniſhment is odious and cruel; to be avoided all Manner of Ways; eſpecially in a tender-hearted Clime as ours is. I need not multiply Inſtances, thoſe of Wool and Clipping verify this Propoſition. *Tully* in his Book *de Legibus*, Lib. 2. hath a Syſtem of Law, wherein he concludes, that *Reaſon is ſo eſſential to a Law, that it cannot ſubſiſt without it*: *And* that *a Law againſt Reaſon is void.* So the Common Law of *England* ſays alſo; *for if an Act of Parliament erects a Court of Judicature with Power declared to determine by hearing one Side only, that Act of Parliament*

7. *The Nature and Uſe of Puniſhments.*

ment is void, as being contrary to a Principle of Juſtice. And ſuch is what *Tully* calls Reaſon, meaning, ſome Principle of Juſtice, without which, the Law would be evil in itſelf; but not every Inconvenience. But of all Inconveniencies which can attend a Law, it is one of the higheſt, and moſt near to natural Injuſtice, when the Law terminates in ſevere Puniſhments; and, as human Nature is conſtituted, neither can nor will prevent the Offence, or reform the Abuſe, as I hinted afore to be in the Caſes of Wool and Clipping: For it is truly to execute Rigour without the Fruit. But, ſometimes, Men will be exorbitant againſt both their own Intereſt and common Juſtice; and out of an innate Pravity, delight in unprofitable Miſchief. Much of this Humour is found in Children, who are, as Women uſe to ſay, unhappy; being pleaſed with perverſe Actions, without any Senſe at all of the Effects. Men have the ſame Humours in a higher Degree; and will chooſe ill Courſes, though dangerous, for meer Ill-nature; and refuſe better, though more their Intereſt, and ſafe. Thoſe who have lived in Buſineſs, and know Men, have often found ſome ſo propenſe to indirect Ways, that they will ſacrifice a plain and direct Buſineſs to a Trick: And others will be Thieves and Robbers, though no Neceſſity drives them to it; but from a malign Habit of Mind, which drives them into ſuch Practices, as the only Satis-

Satisfaction they can have. Such cannot be reſtrained but by Puniſhments, for Intereſt ſcarce toucheth them, but Fear may; and therefore punitive Laws, in Caſe of Conviction, ſhould be rigorouſly executed. A third Sort, mixed of theſe, are ſuch as do not think much, but are driven by Accident, and move either to Good or Evil, as Company determines them; but are ready to conſider and be wiſe, if their Intereſt appears groſs and plain, or Terror reaches them. And ſuch as theſe are the Generality of Mankind; eaſily deluded, tempted, or frighted; ſhallow Thinkers and obnoxious to Error. The Laws, proper for theſe Men, ſhould be ſuch as lay their Intereſt before them ſo plainly that they cannot overlook it, and to take away all the Occaſions which they catch at to delude and ſeduce one another. This with a Mixture of Puniſhment, will, if any Thing can, bring the common Men into Order, and to purſue their own Intereſt. And you are to expect more Advantage from the perſwading Part, than from the punitive Part of a Law; becauſe much fewer will reſiſt an Evil upon Account of Fear, than purſue a Good on Account of Profit; and the Profit ſhall draw more than the Terrors fright away.

Now to apply this Diſcourſe, it is not to be expected that whipping of Beggars, Vagabonds, Wood-Stealers, Petty-Larons, and the like, ſhould diſpoſe Men to an induſtrious Courſe

Courſe of Life; though it is not without its Virtue too: For the immediate Intereſt or Gain by Theft, *&c.* draws ſtronger than Fear of Whipping, of which, their aſſured Hope to eſcape ſoon gets the better. So Hanging and Drawing Clippers and Wool-Tranſporters doth not cure the Evil, becauſe the Gain is great, and the Danger of Diſcovery and Puniſhment little. The Odds much exceed a Proportion; which will ſerve to tempt thoſe Gameſters. And if the Gain were leſs, and the Puniſhment greater, they would not forbear. So Goal, Houſe of Correction, *&c.* are ſcarce thought of when the Offences are committed that deſerve it. The Good is preſent, the Evil to come. So that as long as People are poor, and Poverty tempts to Vice, and there is no Deſpair of Livelihood without Induſtry, becauſe of the Pariſh Duty to provide; all the Whipping, Goals, and Corrections, that can be inflicted, will not prevent the Effects of Poverty, that is, Stealing, Clipping, and Vagabonding. But if the Laws are ſo ordered that Men ſhall ſtrive againſt Poverty, they will generally grow induſtrious and rich; and endeavour to preſerve themſelves and their Means by keeping the Laws, which will effectually prevent Offences and Diſorders. And how ſhould this be done better than by turning up the People to ſhift for themſelves, by repealing the Laws for the Poor, and declaring that if they do not provide, they muſt

take

take what follows; and that, if they will, they may mend their Condition, when nothing obſtructs or excuſes them; and when they have no Handle vainly to flatter themſelves in the Help of others.

Laws, therefore, of Severity will never make a Regulation in *England*; for our Natures are ſoft and pitiful. We have Compaſſion at puniſhing the vileſt Rogues, and therefore cannot be rigorous, nor hold one another to the hard Labour the Laws require and inflict. And if Men are not willing to execute the Laws, other Laws, made with Penalties to enforce them, is like making an Hole to put out of the Way the Earth taken from another, which produceth the ſame Inconvenience.

I know I ſhall be told of very great Severities uſed by the *Engliſh*, as by any Nation, in diverſe Inſtances, even up to the Character of Cruelty and Barbarity. I grant it true, but with this Difference; that is, when out of Order: As upon popular, factious Tumults and Revolutions, they are worſe than many other Nations; though not often riſing to promiſcuous Murther, as the hotter Nations do. But in Impriſonments, bad Uſages, Burning, Deſtroying, and other more formal Handling, in the Diſguiſe of Law and Juſtice, they are cruel enough; but never when it ought to be, in Times of Juſtice and good Order; for the People always take Part with the Sufferers; and helping Criminals to eſcape is ſo earneſtly done,

done, as if their Compaſſion had this Reaſon, *that they do, would, or intend to do the ſame themſelves.*

This is not all: The Execution of Laws is a Matter of Skill, as well as ſtrict Diligence and Application; which, in our Nation, is not found ſo plentiful as it ſhould be. It is an Employment for Men of Buſineſs, as we ſtyle them, who are well practiſed in the Affairs of their Country. And if there happen to be ſome few who, out of a true Zeal and public Spirit, affect Country Buſineſs, and there be the leaſt Failing or Vanity intermixed, from which ſcarce any Mortal is perfectly clear, that ſhall be maliciouſly obſerved and exaggerated againſt them, even while they are in actual and gratuitous Service of the Public, and often for the Sake of a meer Jeſt, and by ſuch as know no better, and are incapable of ſerving ſo well; which is ſuch a Diſcouragement as makes the beſt Men decline the Public.

This yet is not all; Informers are infamous, the Officers, that miniſter in the Courts, are corrupt, and, for want of good Government over them, and ſevere and inexorable Examples of the Guilty, cheat Juſtice itſelf. And if any one, deſiring to correct an Officer, chargeth him publickly, 'tis Odds but, for Want of Skill in Forms or Terms, he doth it ſo aukwardly, that, inſtead of mending the Fault, expoſeth himſelf, and the crafty Officer takes Advantage, and ſets up others, of his Party, upon

upon him, and grows more impudent and audacious in his Knavery than ever he was. For this Reaſon, many worthy honourable Perſons, being conſcious of their Defects, decline public Buſineſs, and are glad when forward and pragmatical Men put themſelves upon it. This is ſo notorious, that there are few Countries where the public Buſineſs is not moſtly diſpatched by ſuch as one would not truſt to conduct a private Concern of five Shillings. This indeed brings a Scandal upon the Buſineſs of the Country, as if it were unbecoming a Perſon of value. So the Country is ſurrendered to be harraſſed by Knaves and Cheats, who might be ſuppreſſed almoſt every Seſſions, if due Courſes were taken, and ſuch had not Protectors where we ought not to ſuſpect any.

From hence it is that Laws which require ſevere and rigid Execution, ſuppoſing them naturally proper, will not, in *England*, reach the Deſign, that is Reformation. In the mean Time let us imagine for once that apt Laws, and well executed, would do much to prevent Thieveries, Robbing, *&c.* yet, if we conſider our Conſtitution, as is, and will be, the Practice of it in criminal Caſes, we ſhall find in it ſomewhat more which will vitiate all again, and render them ineffectual.

A Thief is brought to Priſon, not to a ſolitary Confinement, which might give him Opportunity to reflect on his paſt Follies, and

(eſcaping preſent Danger) reſolve never to venture again, as is moſt probable he would if ſo kept; but he is brought into a College of Thieves, where he meets with Encouragement, and is ſupported in his early Attempts. All the Converſation of Felons is comforting each other, and relating Adventures of their Errantry. By this the Time paſſeth agreeably, and Tricks are contrived for Eſcapes, each lending his helping Hand to get the others off. So that, inſtead of being mortified and reformed by Impriſonment, they are harden'd in Roguery, and become graduate Thieves, as in an Univerſity. And when, upon a Diſcharge from Want of Evidence, Inclination to Pity, Corruption of Juries, or any other ſuch ordinary Means, they come forth very Adepts: And for one Rogue the Gallows takes off, or Examples prevent, the Goal breeds ten. For there Men know no Puniſhment or Uneaſineſs, but only Infamy, which a little Time and Example will digeſt or cure; and then they become ſhameleſs for ever.

8. Some Remarks of Criminals eſcaping Juſtice.

It is wonderful to ſee and obſerve how many Ways Criminals have to eſcape Juſtice; and it makes it leſs ſtrange that we have ſo many, than that we have no more.

1. It is hard to diſcover and then to apprehend them; wherefore, of all the Burglars and Felons we hear of, few are taken: For Men are not (always) earneſt to proſecute in any

any Caſe; and, were they not bound over, very few would be at the Charge to go to the Aſſizes and pay two Shillings for the Sake of Juſtice, to indict a Felon. Nay, when they are taken in the Fact, with the Goods upon them, not one in ten is carried to Juſtice, but the Owner falls to traffick the Felony for his Goods again, and farther, for the Value of all that was ſtolen, ſince the laſt Thief was caught and cleared the Account; which Account of Thief they keep as carefully as that of any Lord whatever, and live in Hopes continually of apprehending their Pay-maſter.

2. But be it the hard Chance of one to be ſent to Goal; if he be an old Thief, and fat in the Purſe, the Goaler ſoon finds his Account, and, not only makes his Confinement eaſy, but aids in order to his Acquital, that he may have more of his Cuſtom: And the Criminal ſhall have a World of inviſible Friends, which Money, either of his own or Friends, ſhall extract moſt wonderfully out of bought Places; as the Sun breeds Vermin in a Dunghill. I ſay nothing of Jury Bum-Cards, becauſe that is no great Secret. And after all, the Law itſelf is mild and favourable, the Judges careful of the Evidence, and requiring that, againſt Life, it be almoſt demonſtrative, which ſeldom happens. Wherefore a Criminal hath great Odds to eſcape by Trial, unleſs he hath very ill Fortune in the Circumſtances of his Taking.

3. But let him be convict. Perhaps it is the firſt Offence, and within Clergy; and then a Dab on the Hand is the worſt, which will not be very irkſome if the ſympathetic Palm of the Goaler be firſt greaſed. And that will arm him for a like two, three, or four, or any Number of Offences within Clergy. However it is ſeldom that the Advantage is taken either of *non legit*, or double Offence, which paſſeth not but on the Sight of the Record of a former. And if his Crime fall within, or he be ouſted of Clergy, and is Felony of Death, praying Tranſportation fetcheth him off; and, that being granted, he ſails to the next Highway, from whence you may ſhortly hear of his proſperous Voyages.

4. But ſuppoſe him ſtifly proſecuted, and that the Cry of the Country is againſt him; then Tranſportation, and other ordinary Shifts will not ſerve his Turn, but the Man is ſentenced. Now is the Criſis for true Friends to ſhew themſelves in. Sometimes a Reprieve, by the Help of ſome mercenary Courtier, is obtained from above; but that Method, for Want of Time, is not to be relied on. The Judge is going out of Town, and it is ventilated abroad that this is a proper Fellow, fit to ſerve the King, and might do good againſt the *French*: And then, if he will take Service, he is reſerved for the next Captain that wants Recruits. Nay, this Trick of taking Service hath been as good as a general Goal Deli-

Delivery beforehand. It may be, this is his firſt Offence (diſcovered perhaps) and will, as they ſay, be a Warning to him: Or his Aunt's Couſin German was Siſter to ſome Gentleman's Wife's Nurſe's firſt Huſband's Mother-in-Law. So the Train takes, and Intereſt is made with other Gentlemen conſiderable on the Bench (forſooth) who, expecting the like when they have a Turn to be ſerved, join in Applications to my Lord, as they call the Judge. And it being hard to refuſe a Requeſt from the Body of the Gentry (as they call themſelves) whoſe Requeſt is a Screen to the Judge, who had a Mind to the ſame Thing, the Man is reprieved. Then, after a Year's lying, the Edge of Proſecution and Clamour is abated; and the next Judges not caring to award Execution upon a Trial before another Judge, way is given to ſue for a Pardon, and at his own Charge if he be rich; elſe, paying moderate Duties to the Clerk of Aſſize, he gets a Place in the common Circuit Pardon. None gets by his Execution except the Hangman, whoſe Vails are but a few old Cloaths; and his Intereſt will go but a little Way to encreaſe them.

5. Thoſe, who do ſuffer, are very few in Compariſon with the Eſcapers, and are commonly ſuch as Debauchery and Lewdneſs hath not ſwept away, and have lived in a concatenated Series of Roguery, until that unhappy Paſs, ſucceſsful. Therefore the Terror to others,

others, from Examples, is inconſiderable as to Effect. Soldiers, for an half-ſtarved Livelihood, venture more, and at greater Riſk, than Felons that live like Princes. If a poor old ſtupified Crony doth come ſhort home, and is hanged, the reſt of his Crew have a Compaſſion for, and pity him. Alack a Day! he had ſome good Qualities, either was a good Setter, nimble Actor, or courageous; and they aſcribe his hapleſs End, not to his Demerits, but to Want of Dexterity at his Trial, or ſome unlucky Planet at his Nativity. And, all this while, they make full Account to manage their own Caſes with more Subtilty and Circumſpection, and ſo paſs the Time under a ſtrong Faith of eſcaping. But, when one is acquitted, he falls, like a Tyger, upon the Proſecutor, with an Action on the Caſe for falſe indicting; and none are ſo fierce, this Way, as the Guilty. Hence it is that, ſometimes, the worſt Rogues are often let go, and not ſo much as indicted; and, at other Times, innocent Perſons, againſt whom an Accuſation is begun, ſhall be proſecuted to Death: For Men think, by thorough ſwearing a Man to the Gallows, to ſave themſelves from the after-clap Action. All this Digreſſion concerning Puniſhments in *England*, is to ſhew how vain penal Laws are for Reformation, and that there is never a conſiderable Amendment, that doth not ariſe more from Invitation than Terror. I now procced to the ſecond Part of my Undertaking.

2. And

10. *That the Laws for the Poor do not help but rather hurt them.*

2. And that is to conſider whether theſe Laws do in Reality bring any Comfort, or be, in Truth, charitable to the Poor, as is pretended, or not; wherein it ſeems to me that they are ſo far from this, that the Poor are great Sufferers, and betrayed into the worſt of Conditions by them.

For, firſt, much leſs is given, by Way of Alms, to poor People, than would be if the Law did not ſemblably provide for them. It is a common Anſwer to Beggars, that they muſt go to the Pariſh; and what they get there ſhall be obſerved anon.

2. The Poor have not the Benefit of the Charity that is intended for and given them by good People. For what is more known than that Pariſhes well endowed, have low Rates for the Poor. The Produce of Feoffment Lands, dying Perſons Legacies, Sacrament and other Collections, and other charitable Monies, which fall into the Hands of Church-Wardens, are, it's true, given the Poor; but then a Rate or two is ſaved to the Pariſh by it: And the Poor ſcarce eat or drink the more. So when Bread is given to be diſtributed, it is ſet out for Oſtentation, and the Poor have it, which is moſt likely to do them ſo much Good; but then the Pariſh conſiders that leſs Collection will ſerve. This makes all charitable Donations and Collections, intended for the Relief and Comfort of

poor

poor People, to be adminiſter'd by Pariſh Officers (who are ſuppoſed to know beſt who needs moſt) to be meer Deluſions; and, in Effect, they do but eaſe the Pariſh Rates, that is, relieve and comfort the Rich: And the Poor have no more than ſtrict Maintenance to prolong a miſerable Life. Whereas, if no ſuch ſeeming Proviſion had been made for them, all, that is given, muſt be diſtributed, and they would have it in the ſame Plenty, as was intended, without being pinch'd on the other Side by ſubſtracting ordinary Collections.

3. There is not a due Conſideration for diſtinguiſhing the leſs-deſerving Poor from others, to whom Charity is more worthily given. For, generally ſpeaking, ſuch as, out of Vice or Lazineſs, are fallen to Poverty, and being ſtill lazy, but, withal, petulant and clamorous, ſhall teaze the Pariſh Officers to get Collection; if they refuſe, then teaze the Juſtice till he orders it. And, all that While, the modeſter Sort, when by Misfortune fallen low, do not importune at that Rate, and therefore are unregarded, and left to ſuſtain their Wants as they may. The Pariſh will not be at Charge unleſs the Law compels them. And were it not for private Charity, ſuch as it is (happening not to ſink in Pariſh Officer's Hands) many Perſons, really and commiſerably Poor, would ſuffer extremely.

4. When

4. When a poor Family, or Perſon, is maintained by the Pariſh, it is done ſo grudgingly and extreme ſtrait, that Life is ſcarce maintained by it. This Pariſh Poverty is a Condition void of all Comfort. For to be deprived of Alms (as moſtly on that Account they are) and be left to Overſeers Allowances, and having no other Means to ſubſiſt, is little better than a ſlow ſtarving. A ſhort Life, with leſs Pain, were to be preferred to this pining Death with Pariſh Allowance.

5. Charity would become an indiſpenſable Duty on all Men, in a much higher Degree than it is, if theſe Laws were removed, which, ſtanding, ſeems not ſo neceſſary upon them: For why are we exhorted to give to the Poor in a private Way, when the Law makes us give, as Members of the Public, what there is Occaſion for? Are the public Collections eat and drank up by Pariſh Officers, ſo that the Poor want their Due? Or is it deſired that the charitable Part of Mankind ſhould maintain the Poor, to ſcreen the Purſes of the Rich and Uncharitable? It is certainly a great Charity (deſigned by the Law) to maintain the Aged and Impotent by an equal Tax out of Men's Subſtances; each Perſon in Proportion to his Ability. What is more equal, or agreeable to the Duty of Charity? But (ſay ſome) the Pariſh Officers fail of their Duty, and either do not collect enough, or embezzle what they collect; or do not find out the

Poor, or neglect them. Well then, Muſt we pay for their Oſcitancy, Neglect, or Corruption? Shall their Faults be veiled over by the good Diſpoſition of others, who, by feeding the Poor, make their Accounts light and eaſy? I do not ſay this is pious Reaſoning; but yet it is Reaſoning, and ſuch as gives too much Colour againſt promiſcuous Alms. And all proceeds from the Laws, which, pretending to provide for the Poor, have made their Condition worſe than if no ſuch ſeeming Proviſion had been made. The rather becauſe

6. Charity, when flowing as it ought, and perhaps would, if the Neceſſity enforced the Duty, is more beneficial than Collection. For that riſeth to Liberality, and ſeeks, not only to fill, but, to ſweeten a poor Man's Cup. The other goeth no farther than to maintain Life; and ſo, by protracting a wretched Subſiſtance, depauperates the Spirits even to Deſpair. That never comforts or refreſheth; whatever, of that Sort, comes, is from private Perſons. And if there were no Comfort to be had, but what comes from the ſurly Pariſh Officers, it were a greater Charity to beat a poor Man's Brains out, than generally they afford. Charity is a Sort of Mercy, and takes care of Eaſe and Joy as well as Life. The Pariſh ſeeks only to keep the Coroner out of the Town, that an Inqueſt might not ſit upon the departed Poor, and find them ſtarved. And they will tell you, and argue before the Juſtice,

Juſtice, that the Law, and they hope his Worſhip, will require no more. And yet this is called a Proviſion for the Poor; but it is, in Truth, a Diverſion of, that which would do the Poor much more Good, private Charity.

7. But that, which is worſe than all this, is the Poor are impriſoned in their Towns, and chained down to their Wants, ſo that they are deprived of Means to mend their Condition, if their own Wits or their Friends ſhould ſuggeſt any, by removing to Places more proper for them, either for Sort of Work, or of Friends to employ them. But, if any chance to move for an Experiment, then are they ſent back, and toſt from Pillar to Poſt in Carts, till they return to their old ſettled Miſery again. No Town willingly receives a poor Man, though they want poor People to do the ordinary Works of Huſbandry, becauſe they ſay his Family may become a Charge to the Pariſh. And if one, that is not legally ſettled, happen to be ſick or near Labour, they will hoiſt them up, in this carted Pilgrimage, without allowing them any Repoſe, and, if it be Midnight, hurry them to next Town, and there ſhoot them down like Dirt; and they find there as little Comfort as they left behind. And thus have diverſe periſhed, as the Men about *Croydon* well know. And if I ſhould ſay that as many have loſt their Lives thus, by being carted about with Paſſes, as periſhed by mere Want before thoſe Laws were made, I

ſhould not hyperboliſe. So that, from theſe many Reaſons, I may conclude that the Proviſions, pretended for the Poor, by the Laws of Rates and Settlements, carry a falſe Face, and in the Uſe and Practice of them, are really more prejudicial than of Advantage to them.

11. Whether diverſe might not otherwiſe ſtarve who are preſerved by Pariſh Rates.

Some may be ſtrong in the Affirmative of this; therefore I ſhall a little conſider how the Caſe of the Poor, probably, was before the Act, and how, probably, it would be again, if the Acts were taken away.

It muſt be granted that, in all Times and Places, there hath been, and ever will be, poor People. But, in ſome Times and Places, it is much worſe, and the Poor are greater in Number and Want than in others. Yet it is rarely, if at all, ſeen that any ſtarve for meer Want: And, where ſuch are, it is among thoſe who, out of Pride or Modeſty, will not make their Wants known; for that Hardneſs of Nature is ſcarce found amongſt Mankind, to deny Part of his own Meal to ſave the Life of another. What Gentleman, who lives in a Town, will ſuffer any to die for Want of Food? Nay Farmers, and even Labourers, have ſuch Compaſſion, conſidering it may be their own Caſe, to ſpare out of their Pittance to ſuſtain Life in any that is in meer Danger of ſtarving. This Charity is not wanted in any Country, or Religion; and the common

common Law of *England* allows ſtealing in Caſe of extream Hunger; Which ſpeaks that, in ſuch Caſe, Property holds not, and all Things (as in primitive Chriſtianity) ought to be common.

But however this might prove, it cannot be denied but Parents, Children, Nephews, and ſuch like Relations, who can work, or have any Subſtance, would aſſiſt their Kindred in extreme Want, or if they were ſick, or any Way helpleſs, and they knew they muſt periſh without their Aid and Care. But ſo long as the Pariſh is bound to find them (as they chant it) away run the Huſband, the Sons, *&c.* and leave the poor aged People to the Miſery I juſt now touched upon; and thoſe, whoſe very Company and Converſation would ſupport their Spirits, are gone, that they might not ſave the Pariſh any Thing, as they fancy. And it is well known that, when ſtrong and able Fellows are not humoured by the chief of the Pariſh (as the Officers love to be called) they cry take my Wife and Children, and are gone. Such a Thing, as this, would not be known in the Nation; I mean that able People ſhould relinquiſh their poor aged Parents and Relations, if they thought they left them to periſh for Want of Help (as e'en almoſt they, in Truth, do) and that the Pariſh were not to have the Charge of them. Which would be the Caſe; and it would connect Families in mutual Care of each other, the Strong helping the

the Weak, the Well the Sick, the Richer ſuch as are Poor, if theſe Laws were remov'd. And, before the making of them, it doth not appear that *England* was poorer than now, or than other Countries; but that was a Time of Peace, flouriſhing in Trade and Riches, by Manufactures encreaſed. Nor doth it appear that, then, Men were leſs charitable and humane to the Poor than in other Places. And I do not know of any Country or Place, either Chriſtian or other, where there is any Law like this. And though Proviſions are not ſo plentiful in foreign Parts as here, yet it cannot be ſaid that the Poor ſtarve any where. And if this Law were removed, whereby the ſame Neceſſity would ariſe, which, in former Times, and in other Countries, puts Men upon finding out induſtrious Ways of ſubſiſting, we ſhould find the like Effect of it. Families would foreſee Old Age, and Caſualties that might happen, or Sickneſs, Fire, *&c.* combine in Manufactures, as the wiſer Sort do now; depend on their Labour, and not reſt ſatisfied without ſaving ſomewhat to keep them in ſuch Caſes. They would have Houſes of their own, purchaſe ſmall Parcels of Land, and cultivate them to the Height of Improvement. But, now, all this is, to them, ridiculous, the Pariſh is bound to find them. There is the Refuge of ſottiſh Idleneſs, and is always at their Tongues End. And they neglect Work, and ply Alehouſes accordingly.

In

12. *Some Inſtances confirming diverſe Matters before touched upon.*

In the Countries about *Conſtantinople*, are many Villages; ſome inhabited by *Turks*, and ſome by Chriſtians only. And, of thoſe Chriſtians, ſome are privileged upon Account of keeping the Grand Signior's Woods, from whence the Serrail and City are ſerved with Water. This Privilege exempts from the perpetual Poll of about 20 *s. per Ann.* and alſo allows them to cut and ſell Wood: So that, whenever they are in Want, it is but carrying a Load of Wood to the City, and they have it. The other Chriſtians, that live by Huſbandry, pay the Head Money, and have nothing to ſell for raiſing it, but, the Product of their Labour, Corn, or Manufactures. And thoſe, who have obſerved theſe two Sorts of Chriſtians, by reſiding and converſing among them, ſay, that there is no Compariſon between their Conditions; the latter are ſo much better provided and clean in their Houſes than the others that are ſo privileged. The Reaſon is, that the Chriſtians, at large, know what they muſt truſt to, *viz.* their Wit and Labour in their Callings; and they ply them accordingly, which, in Proceſs of Time, breeds them to an habitual Induſtry, which ſets them in a good Condition and beforehand. Whereas the others live without any Spur, and void of Providence or Forecaſt, and are, conſequently, dull, ſtupid, and wanting of all Things.

The

The *Iriſh* are, in ſome Meaſure, a Proof of the ſame Thing, for their Country is graſſy, and feeds a World of Cattle, and all the Care that is taken for Food, is to milk the Cow when any one is hungry: and their Houſes, Habits and Cuſtoms are ſluggiſh and naſty, and their Perſons dull to Extremity.

In *England*, ſee to the fat Plains or Fens, where the Poor live upon the Commons, having Paſturage of Cattle for little or nothing, and you will find the *Iriſh* Effects upon them. Whereas in the barren Countries, where a Crow is almoſt ſtarved, the People are ſprightly and mercurial, being forced to look out more ſharp for their daily Food.

The *Jews*, at *Conſtantinople*, are numerous, and have great Effects among them; but, withal, a World of Poor: And no People, in the World, are ſo ſuperſtitiouſly charitable as they. Some are forced to give at leaſt 3 or 400 l. *per Ann.* to their Poor: And they are, on the other Side, ſo inſolent, that they demand Charity as a Debt, not as a Gift; and, if not preſently ſerved, threaten inſtead of praying; which is the Reaſon of the *Italian* Saying that the *Jews* beg, *Con Baſton in Mano**. And all this Charity doth but make their Poor careleſs, wicked, and ſaucy; and no People, in the Cities where they are, are half ſo wretched and naſty in Poverty as the *Jews*. For they, relying upon Charity, have no Forecaſt or Induſtry. But

* With a Stick in their Hand.

But the greateſt Inſtance, and the moſt appoſite, is that of *Stow in the Wold* in *Glouceſterſhire*. That is a populous great Town, ſituate in a deſart Country between the Weſt and North of *England*. There is neither Wood nor Water in a Mile and a half of the Town. It is ſeen ten Miles off every Way. It hath ſome Inns for the Uſe of Travellers; elſe, there are not many in the Town that have any Subſtance. The Generality are errant Poor: And in no Place are there better ſettled Poor than there. Their Houſes neat, and Children clean; and not more Beggars, nor ſcarce ſo many as in flouriſhing Countries and great Cities. And there never was any Rate made for the Poor there ſince the Law was made. And no Perſon was ever removed out of the Town, that deſired to live there, nor denied to come in, if any Convenience invited him. And this is ſo fixed in their Minds, viz. *that they ought to provide for themſelves*, that they abhor a Juſtice, and will not endure any charitable Revenues, though ſome have been given to be diſtributed there, becauſe they will have no Juſtices (as they call them) come there; and in ſuch Caſe (if I have been truly informed) they have roſe, and drove the Juſtices out of their Town. I enquir'd whether the People were not thieviſh, and a Nuiſance to the Countries round about. They ſaid, that they would not let Wood grow near the Town; nor is it indeed fit for Wood,

being a Place extraordinary bleak; but, otherwiſe, there was no Inconvenience to the Country, from them, but the Contrary; for they went out to work at great Diſtance all round, and came home at Night, and lived very induſtriouſly. And as for Relief, if any were ſick, they, who had ſome Subſtance in Town, uſed to ſend them hot Broth, and Meat; but, otherwiſe, they never relieved them, and therefore were not troubled with them at their Doors.*

*This Account of *Stow in the Wold* ſeem'd to me ſo very extraordinary, that, though I had but very little Reaſon to doubt the Truth of any Fact advanc'd by my Father; yet for the Reader's better Satisfaction, I wrote thither about it, and was favour'd with the following Account of this Affair, from the Rev. Mr. *Brown* of that Place. It is as follows. 'Stow is neither a populous nor a great Town, ſituate on a 'bleak Hill. The Country round about it, is not deſart but 'fruitful. There is no Water in the Town; but there is 'both Wood and Water at a ſmall Diſtance. There is no 'Land belonging to the Town but what it ſtands upon. 'From whence I preſume the Report aroſe of its having nei-'ther Wood nor Water. With Reſpect to the Poor, they 'are ſettled here as in other Places, and have been ſo ever 'ſince ſome Time in the Reign of King *William*, when the 'Poor's Rate was firſt made. In what Manner the Poor 'lived before that Time, I can get no Information. Their 'Houſes are not now remarkable for Neatneſs, nor their 'Children for Cleanlineſs. There are Beggars enough. 'There are ſome very ancient charitable Revenues. There 'always were two or more Juſtices living very near the 'Town. I can hear of no Attempt that was ever made to 'drive them out. Lord Chief Baron *Atkins*, who acted as a 'Juſtice, and lived within a Mile of the Town, was the 'Perſon who firſt obliged them to make one in King *William*'s 'Time.' So that the Poor of this Town ſubſiſted; and thoſe of them, who could not otherwiſe ſupport themſelves, were provided for without the Aſſiſtance of any Pariſh Rate for that Purpoſe, till ſome time after the Revolution. *M. North.*

The

The Caſe of this Town is no leſs than a Demonſtration to the Senſes that I have argued with Reaſon againſt theſe Laws.

There is one great Inſtance, to ſhew what Abuſe the Laws for the Poor are liable to, in *Colcheſter*. There is the beſt regulated Manufacture that I ever heard of, the Bays. And a very great Advantage is by it to the Bays Merchants, who are the Governors of Pariſhes, and alſo to the Poor who are very numerous, and employed under it. And yet the Rates for the Poor are higher than in any other Places, *viz.* 25, 30, 35 *per Cent. per Ann.* Revenue of Houſes and Lands in the Town. Upon a ſtrict Enquiry, we, with much ado, found out that the Bays Merchants, who ſet the Poor on Work, paid Part of their Wages by the Pariſh Rate in the Name of Collection. So that, if a poor Man could earn Ten-pence a Day, they would give him but Six-pence for his Day's Work. But then he ſhould have Four-pence per Day Collection. And, having Juſtices among themſelves, this is made good, whereby the Land Owners pay for the Bays making.

3. Now I come to the laſt of the three Things I propoſed; to make appear that the End and Deſign of theſe Laws is fruſtrate, and that is Induſtry, which is ſo far from being encouraged, that it is altogether diſcouraged by this Law. 13. *Induſtry diſcouraged.*

For what is more obvious in Conduct of Men than that, if you will take upon you the Trouble and Charge of providing for any Perſon, he will never take any Care to provide for himſelf. All People have this inductive Reaſoning with themſelves, viz. *If I do not provide in Time, I ſhall be poor, and, if poor, I ſhall be miſerable. I have found Men hard to me; and I muſt not depend on their Goodneſs in my old Age.* But all this Prudence is poiſoned with a falſe Dependence on the the Poor's Laws. For thoſe ſing another Tune, viz. *What need I take Care, and ſlave all my Life, the Pariſh is bound to provide for me when ſick or old.* Now I will allow that ſome (but very few) may be wiſe enough to know that Pariſh Poverty is as miſerable as human Nature can bear, and will provide, as well as they can, for themſelves. The Generality of Men are not wiſe, or true Thinkers. They ſhall ſwallow Words, or Jargon, for Things, and taſte only what is ſuperficial. You muſt ſerve them with groſs Propoſitions, plain and downright to Senſe, if you would influence them; and not expect they ſhould refine, and hunt for Conſequences that are not barefaced and immediately preſented. As, ſay to a lazy Fellow, *Who do you think ſhall keep you in your old Age?* He replies, *the Pariſh*; not conſidering that, ſo, he is miſerable enough. Take the Word *Pariſh* from him, and he ſhall gape, and, with little thinking, rather

go

go to work than give an Anſwer: But if he, for all that, goes on in Lazineſs, the firſt Sickneſs or Want, that toucheth his Skin, awakens him, and he reſolves on a better Courſe of Life to prevent the like; and ſo, being once entered, he goes on, and trains up a Family, and breeds many a ſturdy able *Engliſhman* who ſhall need no Man's Help to live.

I need not much labour this Matter; for ſo long as it is manifeſt that the Deſign of working Stocks, intended to be ſet up by the Act, wholly fails, the other Deſign, of advancing Induſtry, is alſo quaſhed: For no one can think *Lubberland*, as the Jeſt is, a Place for Induſtry to grow in; I mean Places where the Public is ſaid to provide for ſuch as want, which Men, inclined to Lazineſs, as moſt are, will improve by adding that they need not provide for themſelves. This is laying of Cuſhions to make Men ſtumble, but then to fall eaſily; and is a Declaration in ſhew, though not in Truth, that Men are Fools that lay up any Thing againſt Sickneſs or old Age.

In fine, I leave this Matter as plainly proved, *viz.* that the Ends of that Law do not prevail, but the contrary. I next proceed to ſhew that as well the Rich as Poor, that is the Public, ſuffers extremely, and is in Danger of utter Ruin if this Law be not removed; which was the ſecond general Diviſion, intended, of my Diſcourſe.

Here

14. *Introduction concerning the publick Intereſt in theſe Caſes.*

Here a large Field opens, and ſo much offers againſt the Law of the Poor, and Settlements, that I find it difficult to collect and digeſt it all in any tolerable Order. And I believe that, beſides what I ſhall ſet down, every Perſon, experienced in Country Affairs, will be able to ſuggeſt a great deal of Miſchiefs and Inconveniences, of their particular Obſervation; and therefore I muſt appeal to general Experience for all that I ſhall omit.

I do not pretend that a meer Contribution of Money is ſo great a Nuiſance to the Nation, as ſome, who magnify the Poor's Rates to be even equal to, or more than the Crown Revenue in the Time of the ſharpeſt Wars: Nor that any Ruin to the People in general can grow from thence. For it matters not to the Public who is rich or poor; and they may interchange States as often as is poſſible, the Public neither looſeth nor gaineth, and the grand Stock is ſtill the ſame. Therefore I ſhall diſmiſs this Conſideration of pecuniary Collections, as trivial with Reſpect to the other fatal Miſchiefs which this Law hath charged upon the Nation. And, to keep the beſt Order I can think of at preſent, I ſhall rank theſe under five Denominations;

1. Depopulation.
2. Enhancing of Labour.
3. Fall of Lands.
4. Decay of Trade. And,
5. Encreaſe of Poor.

It

It will be eaſily granted that Plenty of People are the Source of Riches in a Nation. Eſtates are but as good Ore, meer Stone, without Art and Induſtry to extract the Metal. I wonder what Gentlemen expect to make of their Eſtates, if they can have neither Tenants nor Labourers; they muſt labour themſelves, keep their Cattle company, and wear Sheep-ſkins, as their *Britiſh* Forefathers did, if they cannot have, as now, Multitudes to go and come on their Errands, as well as work and ſweat, as well here as in moſt Parts of the World, for them to raiſe Profits of Land, negotiate them abroad, and import Dainties to pamper and pleaſe with. Theſe are they that cauſe Plenty, Wealth, Greatneſs, and all that makes a Nation be eſteemed rich, ſafe, and happy.

15. *Depopulation is a Conſequence of theſe Laws, and a Step to publick Ruin.*

Now a People are to be held or loſt by the Management of them. They are free Agents, and induſtrious as Bees, to find out infinite meandrous Ways by themſelves, every one according to his Mother Wit, for the obtaining the Materials of his own Subſiſtance and Convenience. And where they proſper, or (which is all one) believe they ſhall proſper and be ſafe, they will encreaſe and multiply; but, if they have no Opinion of future Succeſſes, they decay, and, by Degrees, are, to that Place, loſt; and the few Remains of them will be but ſuch as live, like *Iriſh*, upon Herbs

Herbs and Milk, without Thought of Improvement.

There is no other Account, but this, why the moſt commodious Countries for Habitation and Buſineſs, as *Aſia*, *&c.* are deſerted, and the worſt, as *Holland*, *Venice*, *&c.* ſwarm. In one Place they deſpair of their Safety and Convenience, and in the other, though, in Truth, they have neither, yet they think they have them. Nothing pleaſeth human Nature, but that which they call Liberty, or rather Security; for their Kind is ſo apt to tyrannize over others, and each knows it by himſelf, that they compound not to be Slaves to each other, and ſubmit (againſt their Deſires) to Laws. No Art ſhall draw Pigeons ſo powerfully, as the Name of Liberty ſhall draw People to inhabit in any Place: And the viſible Decay of People, in ſome Countries, is not, as many think, from a Tranſlation to other Places, but from waſting, and want of the Encreaſe which Nature, if encouraged, would give, to ſupply the old Stock which is always wearing off, and muſt be recruited. Convenience makes them ſettle, marry, procreate; Want of Convenience makes them ſcamper into adventurous Voyages and Projects, till, by War, Diſeaſes, or the Gallows, they are cut off. In Peopling, *Lucrum ceſſans eſt Damnum emergens:* And in all Countries, the Signs of Depopulation are Symptoms of Ruin to the Public, as will farther appear.

1. As

1. As Liberty, or the Opinion of it, encreaſeth, ſo the Contrary, Reſtraint, and in a moſt tender Point, that of Habitation, and chuſing their Place and Way of Reſidence, diminiſheth the Quantity of People every where. I grant ſome, either out of Humour, or the Chance of Nativity, will inhabit in Bogs, or under the worſt Tyranny, partly not knowing, and, partly, not caring for better. But they ſhall be abject unflouriſhing People, and not encreaſe, but, on the Contrary, decay, in ſome Meaſure, continually, although the Humour is ſo ſtrong in them, that no Invitation to a better will prevail to draw them to it; for if nothing draws them off, for certain, on any Exigence by War or Peſtilence, they ſhall have no Recruits from abroad. But we are not to make a Meaſure of Mankind from ſuch an Humour, or Prejudice for its natural Soil; nor calculate their Growth or Decay from any other Principles than Liberty, Security, and Convenience; without which we muſt conclude that the Race of them will, in Time, wear out and be loſt.

16. *Reſtraint of Habitation hinders Encreaſe of People.*

Then ſurely it is a great Impriſonment, if not Slavery, to a poor Family, to be under ſuch a Reſtraint, by Law, that they muſt always live in one Place, whether they have Friends, Kindred, Employment, or not, or however they might mend their Condition by

removing: And all becauſe they had the ill Luck to be born, or to have ſerved or reſided a certain Time there. Such Perſons, if they had Spirits, have no Encouragement to aſpire to better Condition; ſince, being born poor, and in a Place which gives no Means to be otherwiſe, they are not allowed to go and ſearch it elſewhere, and, if they find it, they are not permitted to entertain it. Then their Spirits ſink, and they fall into a ſottiſh Way of living, depend on the Pariſh who muſt, however wretchedly, maintain them.

There are many Inſtances which ſhew that this Reſtraint of living, called Settlement, more particularly and ſenſibly ſteals away our Stock of People. The more a Place, in Truth, wants People, the fiercer are the few Inhabitants to keep out Strangers. The Reaſon is, the Charge of the Poor, on a ſmall Number of Inhabitants, is heavy, almoſt to Oppreſſion, in ſome Places, which, if the Inhabitants were more, would be lighter. This is the Caſe of Towns lately encloſed, or ingroſſed into a few Hands; the Proceſs of which hath depopulated the Place; and it is impoſſible it ſhould ever recruit again. A new Comer cannot be concealed there, as in great Pariſhes and Cities; therefore, when one comes, the Officers of the Pariſh have him ſtraight to the Juſtice, and ſo, with Cart and Whip, to his laſt Settlement.

Some

17. *People, removing, are not found all in other Places, but moſtly are waſted.*

Some may ſay that, when People leave the Country Towns, it is but a Tranſlation of them to Cities and other Places, and not a waſting of their Number. I grant that if you look to the Beginnings, and in ſingle Inſtances, this may be true; for populous Places invite by the Society they have; and Men, that remove, are apt to go to ſuch: But, if you look to the Conſequence and Effect of ſuch Removes, it will be found meer waſting; and that the Cities (*London* excepted) are not more populous than in former Ages. And ſo the Decay grows as well by Deſertion as want of Encreaſe.

The ſuppoſed Growth of great Cities, and particularly *London*, which is manifeſtly increaſed to an immenſe Proportion beyond former Times, is much, of late, noted and lamented, as if they robbed the Country of their People; and therefore the Country Gentlemen, that ſee the next Hill, but know little before or behind, are often moving in Parliament to reſtrain its Growth. But that is like patching a diſeaſed Body, by applying a Plaiſter to every Scab as it appears; which will never make a Cure of what lies inwardly in the Conſtitution, and proceeds from a bad Diet. Mend the Habit and Conſtitution by removing the Cauſe, and you will have no Need of Plaiſters. They think to mend the Public

by tormenting it with cramp Laws applied to every individual Miſchief, as they find, or rather feel it out. This will never ſignify much, and is an Error, in nothing more viſible than, in this Caſe of Peopling.

18. *Cauſe of the Growth of great Cities.*

I deſire it may be obſerved that great Cities neither are nor can be ſo careful to keep out new Comers, as Country Villages are. For the great Numbers, already there, ſcreen thoſe that creep in on Pretence of Labour, or Trades, and ſo they lie concealed for many Years, and are, at length, ſettled. It is plain, from hence, that the City muſt, in Time, get all the People, and, wherever they are wanted, the Cities will have them. I may boldly affirm that if the Laws would permit People to remove into the Country for Affectation of Variety (which they, as well as Country Folks, are obnoxious to) or for Health, or Cheapneſs of Living; and to remain, where they found to ſettle, without Jealouſy or Diſturbance, Thouſands of People would come from great Cities and Towns into Country Villages. But the Caſe is ſo unfortunate that the People may remove to, but not from, Cities: And, beſides the flitting unſatisfied Humour of moſt Men, which makes them apt to change, there is, in Cities, Employment for all Sorts of People, ſo as none there, that are induſtrious, can want Work. Then alſo there are Pleaſures and Luxury as well for the Poor as Rich,

the

the former being addicted to it as well as the Rich; all which invites thither. But, in the Country, a poor Man muſt do the Work of the Town, whatever it is, or ſuck his Paws. There is no Room for him to invent, or exerciſe his Fancy in employing himſelf. If he were allowed to remove from Town to Town, ſome would come and ſome go, as their Inclinations led them, and no Place would want. I ſhall deal more in this Subject afterwards; at preſent I uſe it only to ſhew that the Laws are the Cauſe of this Miſchief of People gathering to Cities. Which Cauſe removed, we ſhould find the Conſtitution, in Reſpect of equal Diſtribution of People, ſpeedily mend of itſelf.

19. *Diſcouragement of marrying hinders Encreaſe of People.*

When Men are not allowed to ſettle and remove, as they fancy they may ſubſiſt with Comfort or Convenience, they will not encreaſe their Burthen by marrying, but keep themſelves ſingle; in which State they believe they can ramble and ſhift better. This hinders the Country of many a procreative Family, which would furniſh out able and vigorous Conſtitutions for Huſbandry or War. This makes Youth ramble to Cities, where they expect better Uſage than at Home; and there match and ſettle if no Mortality, or Accident, overtaking, deſtroys them in the mean Time. That is a clear Loſs of an able Body. But ſuppoſe they ſurvive their Follies;

and

and ſettle, and have Children; they live ſo poorly, and in Want of all that is wholeſome for Life, live in Cellars, bad Diet, cloſe packed, Want of Exerciſe, and, which is worſe than all, the Rewards of unlawful Luſt, which, with ſuch People, is promiſcuous, and, having no fitting Expedients, as the Rich have, ſweep whole Shoals away, eſpecially Children, of whom *London* is a Sepulchre. Theſe Inconveniencies, which the People find upon their Remove to the City, whereof they were not aware before, but thought all was Gold there, would incline them to ſeek out wholeſome and Country Habitations, for the Sake of their Families, if the Laws would permit them; but they cannot do it for fear of being carted and whipt back again. And thus, in the City, they are heaped up in naſty Holes, and lie and infect each other with Diſeaſes and Immoralities.

What is more ordinary than for young Men and Women to decline marrying becauſe there is not an Houſe, in the Town, for them; when the next Town, perhaps, hath many, and to ſpare, and thoſe neglected, and falling for want of Inhabitants? And is not this a ſenceleſs Conſtitution, that Men ſhall want Houſes, and Houſes Men, and neither Side be accommodated? Young People, that are ſtrong and full of Spirits, are not in their Natures cautious of the Future, but will venture, marry, and truſt Providence, and to their ordinary

dinary Labour, for a Subſiſtance. And tho' this Sort of People have not ſo much Judgment and Foreſight to conſider a Series of Conſequences to come, yet the firſt Step of their Proceeding will take up their Thoughts; and that is marrying; which they ſtill not do without having an Houſe to cover them. Each Inſtance of this, frequent as they are, robs the Nation of a numerous Family, which would ſpring from a poor Man's Match, if you will let him go where his Convenience invites.

And this Matter runs ſo croſs and perverſe, that, if young People are diſpoſed to marry, as they call it, indiſcreetly, that is without Proſpect of Houſe, Furniture, or other Neceſſaries (which, by the Way, Men, in Neceſſity, will find out, better or worſe) they are inſtantly attacked by the grave Elders of the Pariſh, with Arguments againſt it. And why? Not for their Sakes, or the Public, but the Pariſh (to cloak their Avarice of their particular Purſes) leſt this poor Man, or ſome of his Family, ſhould, in Proceſs of Time, prove a Charge to the Pariſh. And this is not done only in extreme Caſes, as I put (though, ſuppoſing poor People lay under Trees and engendered, it is good for the Public) but in middling Caſes, where, with Help of Friends and other probable Means, they may ſhift, and tolerably well.

The Conſequence is, the ſtout luſty Fellows, that are hardy and adventurous, run away, and

ſeek

ſeek a Means to live with a Wife comfortably where they can; ſince the inhoſpitable Humour of their Neighbours denied them the Liberty of ſettling with a Family in their native Town. And the Wenches, being poor and helpleſs, are tempted, and prove with Child, which either they (for Shame or Fear of Puniſhment) kill, or, for ever after, are deſperate and ſhameleſs Proſtitutes, never capable of happy living.

Theſe wicked Proceedings, and the cancrous Effects of them upon the Public, would, when conſidered, create an Amaſement that ſuch could be, and that any People in the World ſhould be ſuch Sots as not to oppoſe the Encreaſe of them. But corrupt Intereſt doth this and more, even for a Conceipt, or Poſſibility only; and makes Men ſnap at Shadows, cut the Bough they ſit on, and do all the abſurd Follies that are exemplified in the World. But, were theſe compulſory Laws for the Poor taken off, we ſhould ſee the Effects of diſcharging a pretended Intereſt, and there would be as much Induſtry to bring People together, as now there is to keep them aſunder.

20. *The Plantations want a Supply.*

If it were not for the Cauſes before hinted, the Plantations would not ſo much drain us of our People. If Men might plant at home to their Content, they would ſoon furniſh People enough to plant the *Indies*; but, for Want of that

that, they are inclined to tranſplant themſelves, and leave *England* deſerted; becauſe, there, they may marry and ſettle, as they pleaſe, without being whipt from Town to Town. And ſurely nothing inclines them more to go thither, than becauſe they cannot move at home to any Place they think more propitious for them. If this were permitted, the Encreaſe might be ſo great as that we ſhould be glad of Plantations to take off the Superfætation. What an Intereſt to the Nation would that be? *Rome* proves this; for it is obſerved that City never encreaſed more than when they ſent out vaſt Colonies, and poſſeſſed moſt Provinces by them.

21. *Deſtroying Houſes hinders peopling.*

It is another very great Deſtruction of People, as well as an Impediment to the Recruit of them, that Gentlemen, of late Years, have taken up an Humour of deſtroying their Tenements and Cottages, whereby they make it impoſſible that Mankind ſhould inhabit upon their Eſtates. This is done ſometimes bare-faced, becauſe they harbour Poor that are a Charge to the Pariſh, and ſometimes becauſe the Charge of Repairing is great, and if an Houſe be ruinous, they will not be at the Coſt of rebuilding and repairing it, and caſt their Lands into very great Farms, which are managed with leſs Houſing: And oftimes for Improvement, as it is called; which is done by buying in all Freeholds,

Copyholds, and Tenements that have Common, and which harboured very many huſbandry and labouring Families; and then encloſing the Commons and Fields, turning the Managery from Tillage to Grazing. And how well ſuch Eſtates have thriven I need not enquire; it may ſuffice to ſay, that this would not be if Men had Liberty to ſettle as they pleaſed. They would become Owners, and not Renters, of Houſes, and have ſuch as their own Labour might keep in Repair; and not live, as Renters, liable to be turned out upon the Pariſh; and they would not ſell their Tenements at any Rate, but in order to buy others, if they did not lean on that broken Reed, the Pariſh, to be kept when old.

Thus much for Depopulation, which is the chief Title of the Miſchiefs I am ſhewing. I proceed to others which are mainly conſequent of this, but, having peculiar Denominations and Intent, give us Means to expatiate in the Subject more largely. So the next is,

22. Labour enhanced by Want of People.

That of late Years, the Enhancing of Labour is one of the greateſt Burthens the landed Intereſt of *England* hath groaned under, will eaſily be granted: For it is notorious that both Year and Day-Men's Wages are riſen almoſt as much as the Profits of Land have fallen; and chiefly in the Tillage Countries, where the Labour of Men is abſolutely neceſſary for carrying on the Huſbandry of the Country: And,

And, in ſome Places, Men are not to be had upon any Terms; but, with much Trouble and ſearching in remote Places, ſome are found and far fetched, and no ſooner arrive, but find themſelves ſo neceſſary, that they fall to impoſing in Wages and Diet, as well as lazy Working, that nothing ſhall content them; and their Inſolence, as well as their Knavery, is intolerable to a poor Farmer.

It is plain enough that this Diſadvantage, at preſent, lies upon the Huſbandry of the Nation, and almoſt confounds it, ſo that neither Landlord nor Tenant knows how to carry on his Work. If the Value of the Product ſinks, and the Price of the Labour, neceſſary to the raiſing of it, riſeth, what hath the Owner? It is, in Truth, a Loſs of his Land, and transferring of it to maintain poor People, that labour, according to their Pleaſure and Humour. Nay, the Caſe is ſo perverſe, that, when the Prices of Corn and Victuals were very low, ſo that Labourers might live at half Charge, yet they would not abate, but rather enhanced their Labour, and made the Ballance good by their Idleneſs the better half of their Time. This, and more, will fall upon the Intereſt of Land in *England* ſo long as that is precarious to the Labourers, and not thoſe to that.

For it is in this, as in all other mercantile Things. Prices are governed, not by Reaſon, or any thing intrinſic, but, by Advantages

Men take of others Needs and Occaſions, which are moſtly influenced by Plenty and Scarcity. For if the Buyer ſtands in Need of a Commodity, the Seller makes the Terms; if he be in more need to ſell, the Buyer makes the Terms. It follows, that Scarcity of People muſt make Labour and Servants Wages dear; for, there being much Work and few Hands in the Country, the Labourer will ſet the Dice, and cannot fail to underſtand his Advantage, for all will court and invite him to their Work, and overbid each other. And by how much Depopulation is the Effect of theſe Laws for the Poor, by ſo much are thoſe Laws an Oppreſſion of the Nation, by enhancing the Price of Labour, and corrupting the Induſtry of the Poor.

23. Labourers (from the Plenty) decline the Work, having leſs Need at preſent, and no Apprehenſion for the Future.

This Miſchief, I have been diſcourſing of, goes yet farther. For, granting we had People enough and to ſpare, the Price of Labour is ſuch as they can make a good Living of two or three Days Work in a Week: And why more, ſay they? This provides Bread, Food, and Ale; if we are ſick and old, *&c.* the Pariſh muſt provide for us. Now if theſe Pariſh Laws were away, and Men put to their Shifts, to expect and know Want, and the Miſeries of it, if they have not of their own to defend them, they will not be ſo jocund upon the Point of Sickneſs

neſs or old Age, but ſeriouſly apply to their Labour, and ſave all they can againſt ſuch Viſitation, that they may not periſh. Pariſh Proviſion is a mere Subterfuge of Lazineſs and Debauchery in the common People. Were it not for that, few Men, though beforehand, would loſe a Day's Work from their Store, and count upon their Labour as Money in their Coffer, and not willingly caſt away the one more than the other.

This works the ſame Miſchief as want of People. For if the Poor ſlight, and do not preſs for Work, as it is plain very many do ſo; the Land Owners, Farmers, and Manufacturers muſt court and preſs them; which need not be done if the Poor had nothing to truſt to for Life and Death but their Work; then the Conſequence falls to the Charge of theſe Laws, as hath been already at large diſcourſed.

24. *Work and Workmen cannot accommodate each other.*

The Evil goes farther yet. In ſome Places there is little Work for the Poor, and in others a great deal. Where moſt Work is, there are feweſt People, and *e contra*. In *Norfolk*, *Suffolk* and *Eſſex*, a Labourer hath Twelve-pence a Day; in *Oxfordſhire* Eight-pence; in the North Six-pence, or leſs; and I have been credibly informed, that in *Cornwal* a poor Man will be thankful for Two-pence a Day and poor Diet: And the Value of Proviſions, in all theſe Places, is much the ſame. Whence ſhould the Difference proceed?

ceed? Even from Plenty and Scarcity of Work and Men, which happens croſs-grainedly, ſo that one cannot come to the other. If a *Corniſh* Man comes into *Norfolk*, he hath a hard Journey back again with a Whip at his Tail; therefore he muſt content himſelf with dead Loſs of his Time at home. If you aſk a Farmer in *Norfolk*, *Why do you not bring Poor into your Town to do your Work? Ay, marry*, quoth he, *and ſo we may bring a Charge upon our ſelves.*

Now what an Eaſe were it for the induſtrious Part of Mankind, if they might tranſplant themſelves where their Labours would yield moſt? It would ballance the Work of the Nation, and bring Prices to a Standard with Reſpect to all Circumſtances of living. It would diſſolve all thoſe exacting Advantages that Men take againſt each other, and make a fair Market of Works. It would find Employment for ſuch as deſire and, now, cannot come at it; and mightily help the Sort of Men, we call Undertakers, who are very inſtrumental in the Public by advancing Manufactures. But the Laws now ſtand in their Light, and hinder both Poor and Rich of their Convenience. As the Caſe ſtands now, ſtout Labourers and ſtrong young Men will come to the Pariſh Officers to provide them Work, or, elſe, away they go to the Juſtice for Collection; and ſome Juſtices are ſo weak as to grant it, which is a great Error and Abuſe.

For

For if Men have Limbs, the World is wide, and they may, without moving Habitation, find Employment, and ought to do it, elſe, they ſhould ſtarve and not be pitied. No Place is ſo barren but will employ Men, if they will conform their Wages to Occaſions; for that will make Work, which cannot be done at ſo high Rates as uſual. If Work be cheap, many Perſons will undertake and enter upon great Deſigns for Pleaſure and Improvement; but not touch upon it when dear. I mean here Gardening, Dreſſing, Clearing, Planting, Encloſing, *&c.* by which, as the Price of Work falls, Work will encreaſe; I am ſure where I am concerned it will.

Would not a Stranger think a Nation void of Senſe, or bewitched in that little Senſe they have, that ſhould bear ſuch Inconveniences from Laws; eſpecially when they are poſſeſſed with an Evil of chopping and changing their Laws, and ſo often to their own Loſs, as we obſerve and lament, and, all that while, do not remove thoſe which keep Labour and labouring Men from coming together? Poor Men and their Families are carted away from Places that moſt want them, and others denied Entrance; and where they abound, and cannot be employed, the Pariſh muſt have the Charge to maintain them. Thus private paltry Intereſt fights againſt the public Intereſt, and the Convenience of all Men. Moſt admirable Policy!

All

All Ages have been poſſeſſed with that ſhallow Miſtake, concerning Laws, that Puniſhments will regulate. I have treated of this already, and here only take up one Inſtance, appoſite to our preſent Purpoſe, which ſufficiently ſhews the Vanity of it. And that is the Statute of Labourers. [5 *Eliz.* 4. 1 *Jac.* 6.] It was thought, by the Means of thoſe Laws, that the Price of Work might be kept to a due Station, proportionable to the Prices of Proviſions. And to make ſure of this (in their Conceit) the Execution of theſe Statutes was intruſted with the Gentlemen of the Country who were Juſtices, and intereſted, to lower Prices of Work: And, if I miſtake not, ſpecial Commiſſions have iſſued for ſeeing theſe Laws executed. And, ever ſince 1 *Jac.* the Seſſions of Peace, in many Places, have ſet the Rate of Work. And the Juſtices, who employ Servants and Labourers, have done all that in them lay to hold the Country to them; but in vain, as all know by Experience. And the Poor laugh at them, and cry *Statute Work againſt Statute Wages:* For Laws will not make nor influence Prices in open Market; and they admit no Reglement but that of Mens Occaſions and Deſires.

Here I am come to another Denomination in my Diſcourſe, which is branched from the Former, and is conſequent of it, and that is the Fall of Lands, the only Staple Intereſt of *England.* Therefore I ſhall treat it as a Thing,

Thing, in great Part, proved already, and illuſtrate what is paſt by Applications and Inſtances of Fact.

25 The Land of England loſeth of its Value for want of poor People.

Thoſe who have been curious to obſerve either the lying of Grounds about many Villages in the Country, or the Evidences of Title far back, ſhall find vaſt Depopulations, not ordinarily thought of, or imagined poſſible to be. For, in ſome, one may ſee the very *Veſtigia* of Streets, Houſes, Outhouſes, Pightles, and ſuch home-ſtall Conveniences, and even Wells ſcattered at large Diſtances from any preſent Dwelling. And in the Title, when old Deeds have been preſerved (uſeful only for the Curioſity of ancient Things) one ſhall find vaſt Numbers of ſmall Parchment Deeds, being Feoffments, and Releaſes to Houſes, Cottages, Tenements, and ſcattered ſmall Pieces of Land in the Fields of the Town, where, now, perhaps, lives only one Shepherd, or Farmer, under ſome ſingle Proprietor. And, of all that Arable and Fields, little is to be found, except the Foot-ſteps of the Plough, which all Places ſhew, though no Memory extends to any Ploughing there. But all is Paſture, or Sheep-walk, which, formerly, was common-field, and cultivated by poor People to ultimate Improvement. This demonſtrates that the Want of Inhabitants hath depreciated the very Land of *England:* For if a poor Man was Owner

of a Tenement and a few Acres, he had an Employment, as well as Maintenance, out of it for himſelf and Family; and all the Manure he could make, rap, or rend, was laid on to fight againſt natural Sterility; which, beſides his perpetual Induſtry in tilling, weeding, and dreſſing it, made it always in good Condition for Crops, of which he ſeldom failed.

But, now, great Farmers undertake all; and if Land be not naturally, or, at leaſt, in ſome Meaſure, fertile, ſo that, in the common Proceeding of groſs Huſbandry, it will bear ordinary and moderate Crops, it is thrown up to Heath or Waſte, and uſed to the lazy Profit of Sheep only; for it would break him to uſe it as a poor Man doth his Acre, and pay for all the Labour, perfunctory at beſt, and at the Price current: And, ſo doing, no Product could recompence it. So Farmers, for Want of cheap Work, muſt turn into Methods which have leaſt Charge, and that is Grazing; which is the Deſtruction of Mankind.

And let it be a Note, univerſally true, that all the Labour of poor Men is Profit and Encreaſe to the Public; for it fetches, or, rather, creates Value out of nothing; or what would not ever exiſt without the Application of his Pains.

26. The Poor are not Land-Owners as formerly.

But there is yet more in this. Thoſe poor Men were, for the moſt part, Land-Owners, and not Tenants; and toiled to eat, and bring

bring up their Families, and were of that luſty, and, I may ſay, honourable Race, ſtyl'd the Yeomanry of *England*, hardy and valiant in the Uſe and Defence of their own. Theſe ſent not their Product to Market, but rather to buy what their own wanted, to make a Proviſion for all his Family. And notwithſtanding all this great Tillage of ancient Time, there was Fear of Famine if a bad Year came, the People were ſo many; and the Word was, *God ſpeed the Plough.* Corn always bore a Price; Gentlemen's Eſtates, if they could, out of their own Managery, ſpare ſome Acres, never wanted Tenants from among theſe Yeomen Men, who need it to live well. But, now, the Conſumption of Corn fails for Want of People to eat it, and we live in Fear that it will grow a meer Drug, as in *Poland*, *&c.* The Reaſon is that, now, the Corn is raiſed all by great Farmers, who ſpend little, but ſend almoſt all to Market. And ſo it happens that thoſe who come to the Market, come to ſell, and few to buy; and that beats down the Price of Corn ſo low that little Rent can be afforded for Tillage Ground.

27. *The Poor advance Markets, and the Merchants the contrary.*

There is a great Difference between the Marketting of poor Men, for their Uſe, and of Merchants that trade abroad. The former will afford much better Prices than the latter Sort. They come for a little and a little, and therefore do not make

Account of a ſmall Matter in the Price of a ſmall Parcel; and that is a great Advantage to the Farmer who ſells to many. But the Proceeding of Merchants is otherwiſe; for they beat down Prices to the leaſt that is poſſible: For what is inconſiderable in a ſmall Parcel, is Gain enough in the vaſt Quantities they trade in. And theſe are the People our Farmers now deal with, and they are pinched accordingly. But then, when they do ſell to poor Neighbours, it is well known how apt they are to pinch them. We find that poor Men care not for Exciſes, nor much for Prices, as I ſaid, for it is little ſeen in their ſmall Parcels. We ſee how much the Price of Ale and Beer is raiſed by the extravagant Exciſes upon it, yet the Poor, in many Places, and particularly about *London*, uſe none but Alehouſe Drink, and have their Bread and Cheeſe from Trades that live well by making and parcelling it out to the Poor. If this Way of dealing went through the Nation, as would be if the Kingdom were populous as formerly, the landed Intereſt would have the Advantage univerſally, as paltry chanling Trades have about *London*; but the contrary is, for Want of People, true.

And if poor Men were left to ſhift, they would ſoon fall into a Way of Tenements and Lands of their own Purchaſe, and encreaſe and multiply their Families and every Thing elſe uſeful to the Nation. But it ſeems the Policy

Policy of our Laws are in the Way, and hinder it.

28. Tenants are wanted to rent the Gentlemen's Eſtates.

The Scarcity of Tenants, which proceeds from Want of People in general, makes Gentlemen perpetually depopulate their Towns more and more, and ſo precipitate their own Confuſion; for they think to contract their Trouble and Charge by contracting their Farms. But I hope they begin to ſee their Error, and will, in Time, alter their Policy, and believe it their Intereſt to encreaſe Houſing, and divide Farms: For great Farms require great Stocks; and few Countrymen, not Land-Owners, (who can mortgage) can raiſe ſuch Sums as are requiſite. And, after all, if Men are not Owners of their Stocks, Rent and Intereſt together bears ſo hard, that there muſt be very great good Fortune, as well as Induſtry, to eſcape being undone.

It is found that Men will launch into Adventure, upon a great Farm, upon borrowed Stock, and truſt much to good Fortune for Succeſs; and if that (as often) fails of the Meaſure expected, then they become Rent run, as they call it, beyond Hopes of clearing. The Conſequence of which is a merry Life and a ſhort one; Why ſhould he drudge for his Landlord who muſt take all at laſt? All he eats and drinks, is his own; and he plies it accordingly, until, at length, his Landlord is glad to get him out of his Farm, and is loth

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to lay him in Jail, that can never pay; and ſo he hath enjoyed his Farm at an eaſy Rent.

But, when Farms are ſmall, the Stock is inconſiderable, and meer Labour of the Family will raiſe Rent, whilſt they live upon the Product. And ſuch are not incumbered with much Charge, which is all iſſued in quick Money to Labourers that are the Peſt and Ruin of Country Buſineſs; but the poor Family ſpare Time to plough, ſow, weed, *&c.* and all they ſell is their own.

There is more yet. If there be Plenty of People, a Man cannot want Tenants; for they will contrive to live in their own Tenements, and be always hiring Parcels one after another, as their Stock encreaſeth, to fill up their Employment. And ſuch, as live, and have Eſtates, in, or near populous Towns and Cities, find the Convenience of this Plenty; which makes ſuch Eſtates ſell for much more than others.

29. The Laws hinder Supplies by Tranſlation of People.

It is from hence plain that Men's Eſtates ſink for Want of People, and they are not allowed to augment their Convenience and Profit by tranſlating People; for, when once ſettled, they are ſo fixed by Law that they often prove a Burthen, rather than, what naturally were to be expected, a Convenience. How eaſy were it to remove whole Families into depopulated Places, and inſtitute, by their Labour, a profitable Employ, either in the Way of Huſbandry, or Manufacture? And

Places,

Places, over-peopled, would gladly diſcharge Colonies, and all the Advantage that is gained this Way, would be, as Land gained from the Sea, clear to himſelf and the Public. But when this is done, if they ſhall grow lazy, inſolent, and diſſolute, and the Juſtice ſhall, at their Importunity, or real Pinch of Want, order ſtrait a pecuniary Maintenance for them, or only but for ſome few, which ſhall be an Example to the reſt, and an Encouragement to Idleneſs and Remiſſion of Induſtry, as the Caſe, ſo circumſtanced, will certainly fall out, it cannot be expected that any Perſon will be ſo indiſcreet to do it, but content himſelf to ſhift, and make the beſt of his Eſtate with ſuch Hands as he can get; and ſo want the greateſt Part of the Value of his Eſtate.

I conjecture that it was for this Reaſon that moſt parochial Churches in *England* were endowed by Lords of Manors, and, thereby, became appropriate, as appendant to the Manors, and preſentable by the Lords of them. For in Times when Religion ſeriouſly prevailed, Men would not live where was neither Prieſt nor Church: And as well Bond as Free Men, would deſire to remove themſelves into ſuch Conveniencies, from any Place that wanted them. Therefore the Men of Eſtates were forced to build, and, out of their Lands, to endow Churches, and maintain a Prieſt, as well to keep their own, as invite their Neighbour's

bour's People, where ſuch Proviſion was not, until it became univerſally done.

This Expedient, of tranſlating People, is ſo uſeful that many have done it, and ſome run the Riſk, others get Atteſtations of Settlements, with Promiſes to retake if they become a Burthen, and they have a Mind to ſend them back. Some have been ſo careful to have theſe Pariſh Atteſtations entered and allowed at the Seſſions of the County; and if the Remove were out of one County into another, then, in both Counties. And what need all this Trouble? The very Fatigue of which diverts many from attempting to tranſlate any Poor for Convenience. And often there are a Seſſions wrangle about the reſtoring the Perſons back, and certainly Trouble in the carting and getting them received; which is needleſs and frivolous; let them move and remove in God's Name, and fare according to their Skill, Induſtry and Labour.

30. *Some farther Notes about the removing of Inhabitants.*

It may here be alledged that, notwithſtanding theſe Laws for the Poor, there are great Changes of Inhabitants, and new Families appear in moſt Places, partly from Change of Tenants, partly new-married People out of Gentlemen's Houſes; and any who can either buy an Houſe, or farm ten Pound a Year, which the Laws allow againſt Settlements,

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I anſwer that ſomewhat of this muſt be granted, elſe, *miſerere noſtri Domine*; for we ſhould ſoon have no People at all. But this is *in tanto*, not *in toto*. And, as to this Point of flitting of Tenants from Place to Place, I ſhall venture to dilate a little, and ſo alſo concerning this Nation of People tranſlating themſelves.

1. As to the Removal of Tenants, if the Courſe of the Country be to farm at Rack, and the People have not, ordinarily, Land of their own, ſuch as we may eſteem Lives or long Terms to be, it is the moſt ruinous Practice that can be. For there is always ſo much to be let, and the People that can hire, ſo few, that the Scarcity of Tenants gives them the ſetting the Dice; and they will be humoured, and courted to come to, or, elſe, to hold on a Farm; and, at the End of a Leaſe, expect Abatement as of Courſe. Some Gentlemen try their Skill, and, to preſerve their Rent from falling (which, by the Way, ſinks their Particular, and ſpoils the Project of matching and ſelling) take Land and Farms into their Hands, and fall to managing; in which they are extremely to be commended and encouraged, doing it with due Care and Application; for nothing elſe will reſtore Trade to the Huſbandry Part of the Nation. But, for want of Money to ſtock, a Debt is contracted in the firſt Inſtance. Then they act by Servants, and mind little themſelves but

Sports and Drinking, which debauches thoſe very Servants whoſe Diligence ſhould make good their Accounts. And, inſtead of being thrifty and careful, neceſſary Qualifications to Managers, and retrenching Charges to recover the Debt, they live up to their old Way, and have not Patience to expect the Turning of the Buſineſs, which is ſlow, and will have its Time; but, as poſſeſſed of an immediate Income, which will not anſwer ſo ſoon. Then the Debt encreaſeth, and Money is wanted for all Purpoſes. The Conſequence is, they either mortgage or ſell, and, at laſt, grow weary, and truckle to the Country People, letting upon any Terms, and are laughed at for their Pains. And not that, without encreaſing the Debt; for the putting into Repair their decayed Houſing (neglected for want of Money) is a new Charge at every Bargain, and ſo all goes worſe and worſe till Ruin ſweeps all.

Here the People, that look after Farms, find their Advantage, that they are neceſſary, and are, accordingly, inſolent and careleſs: They deſpiſe their Landlord, and will live as well as himſelf, or not hire. Theſe good Pennyworths ſink the Price of Corn, for they can afford to ſell cheap, and ſo debaſe the Value of all Country Trade, and that is ſtill urged for farther Abatement. The Tenant, if he be not humoured, throws up; he is ſure of a Farm in the next Town. And there is a moſt fooliſh Way of dealing, to tempt Tenants

nants by Advantages at the Entrance, as light Rent the firſt Year, or the ſecond, breaking up old Ground, pillaging ſome Woods, and, perhaps, a falſe Rent with an underhand Agreement to take leſs, and to pay well for Secrecy in order to cheat in the Sale. This makes a Tenant always to look out for ſuch a Jobb againſt his Leaſe expires; and, that While, contrives to waſte and ſpoil his Farm all that he can, driving the Ground, as they call it, confounding the Wood, and leaving the Place not fit for a ſucceeding Tenant. All which draws intolerable Miſchiefs upon an Eſtate.

31. *The State of Manufacture Towns.*

It may be objected that, finding Work doth not mend the Matter ſo as to eaſe Pariſhes; for what Towns are fuller of Poor and Rates higher than ſuch as *Colcheſter*, that have the greateſt Manufactures eſtabliſhed in them.

I anſwer that it is too true; ſuch Places are oppreſſed by Poor; but it grows out of the Midſt of theſe Laws; For the Men will not follow Work ſo cloſe as they might, but are lazy, depending upon the Pariſh. However, when Sickneſs comes, the Town muſt provide for the Families; which is the Caſe of the Induſtrious as well as Lazy; only in Time, the Induſtrious get a Proviſion, and ſo might ſave the Pariſh; For, as the Laws are, how many are there, in theſe Places, who, from Workmen, get up to be Maſters and rich Under-

takers: And ſurely many more would do ſo if they were not deluded by the Laws.

But the grand Reaſon why Manufacture Towns are full of Poor, is the Fall, or Removing of the Work the Place hath depended on; and, then, the Burthen of all the Workfolks falls on the Pariſh. There are not a few Inſtances of this Caſe in *England*. For one ſingle Man, who is an induſtrious Undertaker, hath kept a Manufacture alive; and when he died, or was diſabled, the Manufacture, for want of his Spirit, Purſe, and Conduct, hath ſunk. Not that it muſt be ſo univerſally; but ſome others, of like Activity, ſpring up in other Places, and ſet the Manufacture a going near them; and ſo it migrates from Place to Place, as the Induſtry of Perſons inſpires and gives Life to it. But ſince the People cannot follow, if there be never ſo much Need of their Help in the Work, on the one Side, nor however hard the Caſe is to the Poor, as well as the Pariſhes, on the other Side, the Caſe is very unreaſonable: And a Stranger, made acquainted with our Conſtitution, would, in this Inſtance, think us bewitched, and our Parliament, with Reverence be it ſpoken, aſleep. So as Men want the Work, and the Work Men, and are, by Laws, kept from accommodating each other; but the Pariſhes are put to feed Families that have not Employ, and the Poor, that are not troubleſome to get that, ſtarve.

But a more egregious Cauſe, of the Charge that the Poor are in Manufacture Towns, is the Cheat of the Aſſeſſors; as I found out at *Colcheſter*, in a Journey, reſting there. The Rates are often there 25, 30, and 50 in the 100, as the Pariſhes are moderate, more or leſs. The Reaſon is the Bay-Makers, or rather the Bay-Merchants, are the Chiefs in the Town, and, at all Aſſeſſments, they rule the Roaſt. And they give the Poor ſtarving Wages for their Work, as Four-pence *per* Day, and make them Amends in Collections out of which they allow Six-pence *per* Day. And ſo the Charge of the Bay-making falls upon the Owners and general Inhabitants, whereof the Gains fall in their Purſes. Which Secret they were content to diſcover, even to Strangers, complaining that they had no Redreſs, becauſe their Juſtices were of the ſame Faction. Their Overſeers are of Trades that ſell to the Poor, and they give them Goods at their own Rates, and ſpare not, to make a full Account.

32. *There cannot be too many People.*

It is a common Saying, *So long as we have Labourers enough to do our Work, what Need is there of more?*

There is great Fallacy in this Speech, common as it is; for is it all one to have Work done cheap or dear? If a few be enough, thoſe few are Maſters, and ſet what Value upon themſelves they pleaſe: While, if there

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be many Labourers, Labour will be cheaper, which is ſo much added to the Profit of Land; and the Poor live as well, or better, being ſo much more induſtrious. And, if there be no Work, they will contrive, and find it by ſome Manufacture, or ſmall Farms, for which they will give great Rents, to enſure their Time ſhall not be loſt.

And, rather than be idle, they will invite Employment to themſelves, by undertaking great Jobbs, at certain Rates, either in Huſbandry or Improvement, or elſe in Gentlemen's Gardens or Parks, planting or embelliſhing; all which is Addition to the public Wealth. And much, of that Sort, would be done, if there were Undertakers, which none will venture upon at Day-Work. And theſe Fellows, knowing how they are depended on, will not take any Thing, nor bend their Minds at all that Way; they know, at Day-Labour, they are ſure of their Pay, which they are not at Taken-Work. It is a ſtrange Blindneſs to eſteem Numbers of People a Burthen, when ſo much Good comes from them; their very Eating and Drinking is a profitable Conſumption of our Country's Product, and their Labour is ſowing Riches for the Public to reap; and it is impoſſible ſuch Opinion ſhould prevail, if the Laws did not bind down the Grievance of the Charge to Towns, of maintaining their Poor.

This

33. *Great Numbers of People are not an Incumbrance to the Government.*

This is another Objection to the Tenor of this Diſcourſe. They ſay, *If we were very populous, Men would be driven to ſuch hard Shifts for a Livelihood, that they would grow turbulent, and apt to plunder or ſteal, and it would be hard to keep them in Order.*

I grant it is the *Ottoman* Policy, to keep down the People of Countries conquered, or ſuſpected to rebel; and if the Government goes upon an *Ottoman* Policy, I have nothing to anſwer but that the People have Reaſon to kick it down if they can. But if the People have Advantage of Laws, executed at their own Doors by rural Magiſtrates, with the Authorities and Officers of the legal Force of the Nation, in the ſeveral Counties, ready always to ſuppreſs Riots and Tumults, and all Beginnings of ſuch Diſorders, there is no Reaſon to fear the People, who, by their Conſtitution of Laws and Parliaments, are ſatisfied they do not live under deſpotic Power; and therefore the Majority will always be for the Conſtitution, and not for overturning it; and even ill Men, for Fear of worſe than themſelves, will be of this Mind. And if any thing tends to Diſorder on the People's Side, it is either the ill State of the Government, that muſt ſupport itſelf, not directly by the clear Laws, but, by Artifice and Inſinuation, looking one Way and rowing another, fearing that a right Underſtanding

ſtanding of the People is a Means to ſubject them: All which ſavours of the *Ottoman*. No Wonder then if Miſchiefs follow. I know a right and honeſt Government may be, and commonly is, weak in Policy, addicted to Pleaſures and Pomp, neglecting the Nurſery of it, Wealth and Greatneſs. The People, like good Plants, thrive not unleſs dug about and weeded; that is made ſecure by Laws well executed, and Deceivers rooted out. If this be not done, then ſuch Weeds grow up; Folk that are either Knaves, or, their Inſtruments, Fools, who join to perſuade the People out of their Happineſs, and tell them a King and his Heirs is Slavery.

But it is not Numbers of Poor, but Numbers of Rich; not Want, but Plenty, that makes Governments ſhake: Elſe Tyrants would not ſeek to impoveriſh their People. It was ſaid of *Rome*, *ſuis & ipſa Viribus ruit*, in an Age of Plenty, wherein Vice and Exorbitance abound, and the very Populace is tainted with them. It may be ſome Difficulty to keep down the Froth and Scum that is apt to work up. And, in this Reſpect, Populacy may be accounted hazardous to Government; for, in human Certainty, it will make a Nation rich; but it will be hard if there be not alſo a correſpondent Sagacity in the Government, which may, with Eaſe, ſuppreſs ſuch ill Humours.

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Having ſpoke of the *Romans*, I cannot but obſerve, that, in Times of their Poverty, they were populous, and grew great, and always found it their Intereſt to let in Foreigners to Freedom, to repair the Loſs by Colonies. And though they were mutinous and ſeditious, they came not to Blood, but were ſatisfied with a Temper given their Government by the Tribunitial Laws. The ſanguinary Commotions, which began in the Time of *Marius* and *Sylla*, were the Reſult of Riches, Pride, and Ambition of their Commanders, and the mercenary Humour of the Soldiery. What is this to a People that hath no Armies, and needs not any, to be a-foot for Conqueſt; and only an Handful of Guards to defend the Laws? And, to ſay Truth, there was not only prodigious Opulence to make the People wanton and capricious, which tended to deſtroy the Government, but the Government itſelf was not fit for a People of ſuch Wealth and Power, as it was when it ſubſiſted in continual Streights and Difficulties. There grew up a Neceſſity of its Change. It was no more a Wonder that it turned from Republic to Monarchy, than that *Europe* and *Aſia* are greater than *Italy*. The Charge and Care of the Public was ſo prodigious, as required Diſpatches inconſiſtent with the Proceedings in Aſſemblies. A Faction troubled Elections of Magiſtrates; when that was over, all was huſh. But, when Armies and Empires came to be voted, a Fac-

tion, by meer diſturbing, overturned all. So that the Phlebotomy, which introduced the *Cæſars*, was but the Cure of a Diſeaſe in that Government, by which it was unfit for the Buſineſs, and introducing one more proper; where the Voice of one Man ended all Addreſſes, Petitions, and Diſputes, which will always encreaſe in Number and Importunity, as Conqueſt and Empire grows. If the People of *Rome* had been truly wiſe, ſeeing this, as ſome did, (*Tully*) they ſhould not have ſtrove *Mordicùs* to reſtore the old phlegmatic factious Methods, but eſtabliſhed a legitimate Monarchy to ſucceed in regular Manner for ever, with due Checks, as ſuch an Empire was capable of: Or, elſe, to have ſet up Kings, in the ſeveral Conqueſts, dependent on the People of *Rome*, and contented themſelves to have held the Balance amongſt them. It was not without Reaſon that ſome would not have *Carthage* deſtroyed; becauſe, being an emulous City, they would have kept *Rome* in continual Exerciſe, and hindred the growing up of Luxury in the profouud Security and Plenty that ſucceeded after the Ruin of that Place. All which Matters conſidered, there will be no Reaſon to charge the Troubles of *Rome* upon Numbers of People, but upon Conqueſt and Empire. And if *England* had ſuch, their Government is fitter for the Conduct of the Whole, and to keep Order and Peace with the People, than *Rome* was.

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To return to the Eſtate of this Kingdom; in which the Conſervacy of the Peace is in the Hands of the rural Gentry. It is poſſible, if the People ſwerve from the true Policy of the State, that, in the Room, ſome fond Folly, or other, ſhall be erected, which ſhall be ſpirited by the People to a Pitch even to uſurp the Law: And then, no Wonder that ſuch Folk, if their Government be not ſagacious and careful to ſet them right, fall foul upon one another, and be finally deſtroyed. Wherefore *Machiavel* ſays, that People often will be furiouſly bent upon their own Deſtruction; and, if not, by ſome good Fortune, hindered, are ſurpriſed with it. The true *Engliſh* Policy, which will ever conſerve Peace and Happineſs, conſiſts in two Maxims.

1. Never to ſuffer the Laws to be undermined, either by Court Flatteries, or popular Tumults; eſpecially ſuch as relate to the Right of Government: But to be ſure to preſerve that neat and defined; ſo that (if poſſible) there can be no Pretence ever ſet up to make a Diſpute concerning it; or give Way to any Change, to which Diſputes are incident. It is much eaſier to preſerve the Laws under the worſt of Kings, than it is to keep out Wars and Deſolation under the beſt of diſputed Governments. The *Engliſh* Hiſtory is fertile in declaring the Fruits of Changes, which were ever fatal to Peace, Plenty and Populacy; nay, to all Order and good Manners. And, which

is worſe, the Powers *de novo* were (as the Horſe in the Fable) armed to ſerve a Turn, and then too ſtrong for their Creators.

The other is to avoid all Manner of Wars that engage the Body of the People. Lions may ſcratch with their Talons, and Bears with their Claws; and, all that while, propell Force, and ſave their Skins. But if they are forced to grapple with equal, or ſtronger, Powers, the Wounds will not be anſwered by the Glory got, though Victory (which is uncertain) go on their Side. For then the People will not be diſtreſſed or harraſſed with Taxes, which always tend to Sedition and Diſorder. I might be more explained in theſe Matters, but hope this is enough to ſhew that we have no Need of Shifts to deal with our People. Honeſty and Juſtice, in Place and Proceeding, cannot fail to have the ſuperior Party; and ſo we need not be afraid of a Plethory of People, but, rather, of a tabid Waſting of them; which is certainly the worſt of Diſeaſes in a Commonwealth.

34. *The long Practice of theſe Laws no Hindrance to the laying them aſide when found inconvenient.*

This is another Objection. They ſay, if they had never been made, the People had done well enough; but now, after ſo much Practice, they are habituated, and wrought into the Temper and Cuſtoms of the Country, and therefore cannot be ſo well laid aſide.

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I anſwer; that the Difficulty, in theſe Caſes, is not from the Nature of the Thing, but a certain Averſeneſs we have to any new Propoſals, though it be to take away an old Slavery. Folk will rather carry a Burthen, they know, that is heavy, than change it for a lighter. The Reaſon is Ignorance, and frequent Diſappointments. It is too often found that new Propoſals, varniſhed over with popular Pretences, are but ſelfiſh Projects; therefore it muſt be a very clear Intuition that makes us truſt any ſuch. And the Unhappineſs is, the Law-makers are commonly Perſons little ſpeculative, though in the Policy of their own Country: And, being uſed more to Pleaſure than the Pen, eating and drinking than Study, following others than being guided by their own Judgments, they hate the Burthen of weighing Reaſons *pro* and *con*, and, unleſs ſome of their Luminaries go before, they follow not; but, with them, they go any where. And this, being liable to Clamour, as againſt the Poor, they are the more ſhy, partly becauſe they would not do an hard Thing, and, partly, for fear of Violence from the Rabble: So that nothing is ſo difficult to be introduced as a Regulation of this Nature. For which Reaſon it ought to be ſtrenuouſly undertaken by ſome of the capital Men in Power and Authority. The Government itſelf ought to leave Money to the Good-nature of Parliaments, and eſpouſe ſuch grand Regulations as

theſe

theſe are. And, if ſome are averſe, they ought to have Good done them againſt their Wills. But, after all Difficulties, the Thing being feaſible, I ſhall add my Thoughts of the Methods proper for it.

35. *The beſt Methods of regulating the Laws for the Poor.*

A tender, nice, Gentleman had Occaſion to draw an aching Tooth, but could not bear the Thought of ſuch a Violence as they to draw it; a Smith offered his Service, valuing himſelf upon a Secret he had to make a Tooth come out eaſily; and, if he might but make faſt a String to the Tooth and the Window of his Shop, the Gentleman ſhould, at his own Eaſe, draw it himſelf. This accepted and done, the Blackſmith went to his Forge, and got an Iron into a Flame Heat, all the while encouraging the Gentleman to pull harder and harder, and to reſt between whiles; till, at length, with notable Quickneſs, conveys the flaming Iron from the Fire almoſt into the Gentleman's Face; The Surprize of which made him forget his Tooth, and recoil with that Violence as drew it clever out.

We are of this Gentleman's Humour; find Sorrow from our Laws, and, as aching Teeth, cannot bear to have them drawn. But ſome State Smith may cheat us into it; and, after it is done, we ſhall rejoice in the Good we ſo unwillingly entertained. And I am ſatisfied that, as the Tooth was drawn, it muſt be done

done all at once; and the pulling by Degrees will never compaſs it. It hath been found in the tendereſt Point, (Money) that People bore the Change of it, even to Loſs in the Purſe of almoſt every Man in *England:* Yet, being done by Parliament, every one bore it with Patience, for there was no Remedy.

Therefore I ſhould propoſe that, in one ſingle Law, or Clauſe, the Statute *Eliz.* and the ſubſequent Laws, depending on it, be repealed at one Stroke, which a few Words will diſpatch; and make no Proviſions in the Room, or to break the Fall at that Time. The Reaſon of that is, the infinite Fancies and Contrivances that will offer as Expedients, and, perhaps, every one worſe than the Miſchief, will make ſo much Debate, and accumulate Objections, as well as intricate the Matter, as it will hinder wholly the Proceeding. When one Point is *ſur la tapis* [upon the Carpet] it lies fair to be debated *de integro, viz.* Whether the Laws for the Poor are beneficial to them and the Public, or not? If they are of opinion, not; there is no more but the Repeal. Whereas if, after that, they muſt enter upon Expedients, there will riſe a Wilderneſs of Debate and Doubt, and the Main will fail by the Delay of them; for every Inſtance will, perhaps, take more Debate than the main Queſtion. And, as for Expedients, there will be better Capacity to judge of them when the Repeal is approved and digeſted, that is, in future Seſſions. Now

36. *The Ways to amend the Laws.*

Now that ſome Proviſions may be needful for hard Caſes, ſuch as, perhaps, had never been if the Laws had never been made, will be thought by moſt People: And therefore, although what theſe hard Caſes are, or will be, may perhaps be beſt referred to Experiment; and ſo Diſcourſe about them vain. Yet, that I may not leave my third general Head entirely untouched, I will venture to make the following Propoſitions, by Way of Amendment of the Laws of the Poor. And they are theſe:

Firſt, That all Perſons now receiving Collection ſhall have the Benefit of the Laws during their natural Lives.

Secondly, That all others incurably impotent, and aged Perſons, who by the Laws in force ought to be admitted to Collection within the Space of Years next enſuing, ſhall have alſo the Benefit of the Laws during their natural Lives.

Thirdly, That as to the Settlement of all Manner of Perſons during the Space of Years, the Laws now in force ſhall continue.

Fourthly, That from and after the ſaid Space of Years, the Laws for the Poor and Settlements, *viz.* ſhall ſtand and be abſolutely repealed and void.

Fifthly, That if any Perſon, except the natural Parents, will be, with the Conſent of the Church-

Church-Wardens, at the Charge of nouriſhing and educating any Baſtard, or other Child, from the Age of three Years, or under, to the Age of twelve, ſuch Child ſhall be bound to ſerve ſuch Perſon as an Apprentice in any Trade or Work, untill it attains to the Age of 25 Years, and the ſaid Perſon ſhall have the Benefit of the Laws touching Servants, as if hired at the Petty Seſſions; and it ſhall not be lawful for any Perſon to entertain ſuch Servant without Leave; provided ſuch Undertaking be regiſter'd in the Pariſh Book. And the Juſtices of the Peace by Impriſonment of the Perſon, or by levy of the Goods, ſhall be enabled to compel ſuch Perſon to nouriſh and educate Children according to the ſaid Undertaking.

But whatever Amendments may be thought proper; or if there ſhould not be any immediately reſolved upon; I here conclude with this Declaration; That if ever the Poor of my Town are left to themſelves, I ſhall think myſelf more bound to preſerve them than at preſent; and ſhall be at more Charge and Sollicitude to ſee it done.

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